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THE

WORKS

OF

PHILO JUDÆUS,

THE CONTEMPORARY OF JOSEPHUS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK,

BY

C. D. YONGE, B.A.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
GEORGE BELL & SONS, YORK ST., COVENT GARDEN,
AND NEW YORK.
1894.

DIVINITY SCHOOL
A 571

LONDON:
REPRINTED FROM THE STEREOTYPE PLATES BY WM. CLOWES & SONS, LTD.,
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

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1854a

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A TREATISE

ON THE

CONFUSION OF LANGUAGES.

I. As to the preceding topics, what has been already said will be sufficient. We must next proceed to consider, and that in no slight or cursory manner, the philosophical account which Moses gives us of the confusion of languages; for he speaks in the following manner: "And all the earth had one pronunciation, and there was one language among all men. And it came to pass, as they were moving from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and dwelt there. And one man said to his neighbour, Come, let us make bricks, and let us burn them with fire; and they had bricks for stone, and asphalt for mortar. And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose head shall reach to heaven; and let us make for ourselves a name, before we are scattered over the face of all the earth. And the Lord came down to see the city, and the tower, which the sons of men had builded. And the Lord said, Behold, all mankind is one race, and there is but one language among them all; and they have begun to do this thing, and now there will not fail unto them anything of all the things which they desire to do. Come, let us go down and confuse their language there, so that each may not understand the voice of his neighbour. And the Lord scattered them from thence over the face of all the earth, and they desisted from building the city, and the tower. On this account, the name of it was called Confusion, because there the Lord confused the languages of all the earth, and from thence the Lord scattered them over the face of all the earth."*

II. Those who are discontented at the constitution under which their fathers have lived, being always eager to blame and to accuse the laws, being impious men, use these and similar instances as foundations for their impiety, saying, "Are ye even

* Genesis xi. 1.

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now speaking boastfully concerning your precepts, as if they contained the rules of truth itself? For, behold, the books which you call the sacred scriptures do also contain fables, at which you are accustomed to laugh, when you hear others relating them." And what is the use of devoting our leisure to collecting the fables interspersed in so many places throughout the history of the giving of the law, as if we had especial leisure for the consideration of calumnies, and as if it were not better to attend merely to what is under our hands and before us? Certainly, this one fable resembles that which is composed about the Aloadæ, who the greatest and most glorious of all poets, Homer, says, had in contemplation to heap the three loftiest mountains on one another, and to build them into one mass, hoping that by this means there would be a road for them, as they were desirous to mount up to heaven, and that by these mountains it would be easy for them to be raised to the height of the sky. And the verses of Homer on this subject are these:—

> High on Olympus' top they strove to raise
> Gigantic Ossa; and on Ossa's heights
> To place the leafy Pelion, that heaven
> Might thus become accessible.

But Olympus and Ossa and Pelion are the names of mountains. But instead of these mountains the lawgiver represents a tower as having been built by these men, who, out of ignorance and wicked ambition, were desirous to reach the heaven. Every alienation of mind, then, is grievous; for even if every portion of the whole earth could be built over, a slight foundation being first laid, and then if a superstructure could be raised in the fashion of a single pillar, it would still be an enormous distance removed from the heavenly sphere, and above all would it be so according to the tenets of those curious philosophers who have affirmed that the earth is the centre of the universe.

III. And there is also another story akin to this, related by the devisers of fables, concerning the sameness of language existing among animals: for they say that formerly, all the animals in the world, whether land animals, or aquatic ones, or winged ones, had but one language, and that, just as among men Greeks speak the same language as Greeks, and the present race of barbarians speak the same language as barba-

rians, exactly in the same manner every animal was able to converse with every other animal with which it might meet, and with which it did anything, or from which it suffered anything, so that they sympathised with one another at their mutual misfortunes, and rejoiced whenever any of them met with any good fortune; for they could impart their pleasures and their annoyances to one another by their sameness of language, so that they felt pleasure together and pain together; and this similarity of manners and union of feelings lasted, until being sated with the great abundance of good things which they enjoyed, as often happens, they were at last drawn on to a desire of what was unattainable, and even sent an embassy to treat for immortality, requesting to be released from old age, and to be always endowed with the vigour of youth, saying, that already one animal of their body, and that a reptile, the serpent, had received this gift; for he, having put off old age, was allowed again to grow young; and that it was absurd for the more important animals to be left behind by an inferior one, or for their whole body to be distanced by one. However, they suffered the punishment suitable to their audacity, for they immediately were separated in their language, so that, from that time forth, they have not been able to understand one another, by reason of the difference in the dialects into which the one common language of them all had been divided.

IV. But he who brings his account nearer the truth, has distinguished between the rational and irrational animals, so that he testifies that identity of language belonged to men alone: and this also, as they say, is a fabulous story. And indeed they affirm, that the separation of language into an infinite variety of dialects, which Moses calls the confusion of tongues, was effected as a remedy for sins, in order that men might not be able to co-operate in common for deeds of wickedness through understanding one another; and that they might not, when they were in a manner deprived of all means of communication with one another, be able with united energies to apply themselves to the same actions. But this precaution does not appear to have turned out of any use; for since that time, though men have been separated into different nations, and have no longer used one language, nevertheless, land and sea have been repeatedly filled with unspeakable evils.

For it was not the languages which were the causes of men's uniting for evil objects, but the emulation and rivalry of their souls in wrong-doing. For even those who have had their tongues cut out can intimate what they wish by nods and looks, and other positions and motions of the body, not less than by a distinct utterance of words. And besides this consideration, there is the fact that, very often, one nation by itself, having not merely one language, but one code of laws, and one system of manners, has arrived at such a pitch of iniquity that, as to a superfluity of wickedness, it may counterbalance the sins of all the men in the world put together. And again, through ignorance of foreign languages, many persons, having no foreknowledge of the future, have been anticipated and overwhelmed by those who were plotting against them; as, on the other hand, by knowledge of foreign languages, men have been able to repel fears and dangers with which they have been threatened: so that a community of language is an advantageous thing rather than an injurious one: since, even at the present day, nothing contributes so greatly to the safety and protection of the people of each country, and particularly of the natives, as their being of one language. For if a man has learnt many dialects, he immediately is looked upon with consideration and respect by those who are also acquainted with them, as being already a friendly person, and contributing no small introduction and means of friendship by reason of his familiarity with words which they too understand; which familiarity very commonly imparts a feeling of security, that one is not likely to suffer any great evil at the hands of such a man. Why, then, did God remove sameness of language from among men as a cause of evils, when it seems it should rather have been established as a most useful thing?

V. Those, then, who put these things together, and cavil at them, and raise malicious objections, will be easily refuted separately by those who can produce ready solutions of all such questions as arise from the plain words of the law, arguing in a spirit far from contentious, and not encountering them by sophisms drawn from any other source, but following the connection of natural consequences, which does not permit them to stumble, but which easily puts aside any impediments that arise, so that the course of their arguments proceeds without any interruption or mishap.

We say then that by the expression, that "all the earth had but one pronunciation and one language," is intimated a symphony of great and unspeakable evils, which cities have inflicted upon cities, nations upon nations, and countries upon countries, and through which men not only wrong one another, but also behave with impiety towards God, and yet these things are the iniquities of many; but let us consider the ineffable multitude of evils which proceed from each individual man, and especially when he is under the influence of that ill-timed, and inharmonious, and unmusical agreement.

VI. Now who is there who does not know the great influence of fortune, when men, in addition to the diseases or mutilations of the body, are attacked also by poverty and want of reputation? And again, when these things are further united to diseases of the soul, in consequence of moody melancholy, driving men beside themselves, or of extreme old age, or of any other severe calamity which presses upon them? For even one of these evils here mentioned by itself, when it opposes a man with violence, is sufficient to overthrow and to crush even one who is very proud and haughty; but when all these evils, to wit, the evils of the body, and the evils of the soul, and external misfortunes, all come together as if in one regular battalion, moving by previous arrangement at the same time, so as to attack him in one body, what resolution is there which they will not overpower? For when the guards are slain, it follows of necessity that he who relies on his guards must fall. Now the guards of the body are wealth, glory, and honours, which set it up and raise it on high, and make it proud, just as the contrary things, dishonour, want of reputation, and poverty, throw it down like so many enemies.

Again, the body-guards of the soul are hearing, and seeing, and smelling, and taste, and the whole band of the outward senses, and also health, and strength, and vigour, and energy. For the mind, when walking among and living in the company of these things, as between well-fortified boundaries firmly standing and solidly established, triumphs and rejoices, meeting with no hindrance on any side to prevent it from exerting its own impulses, but having its road in every direction easy, and level, and open, and easy to be travelled. But the things which are set in opposition and hostility to these

guards are mutilation of the organs of the outward senses, and disease, as I have said before, by which the mind is often precipitated into disaster; and these things are all the results of fortune, very grievous and intrinsically miserable, but still, if compared with those which are brought on ourselves by our own deliberate will, they are far lighter.

VII. Let us now again in its turn consider what is the united body of evils voluntarily incurred. Our soul being capable of being divided into three divisions, one division is said to have fallen to the lot of the mind and of reason, the second to passion, and the third to appetite; and each separate one of these has its own peculiar evils, and also they have all common and mutual diseases. Since the mind reaps the harvest which folly, and cowardice, and intemperance, and injustice sow; and passion brings forth frantic and insane strife and conflict, and all the other numerous evils with which it is pregnant; and appetite disseminates in every direction the impetuous and fickle loves of youth which descend upon every object, animate or inanimate, which it chances to meet with. For then, as if in any vessel, the sailors, and the passengers, and the pilots, had all, under the influence of insanity, agreed to destroy it, those who have joined in the plot against it are none the less involved in the same destruction.

For the heaviest of all evils, and almost the only one that is incurable, is the unanimous energy of all the parts of the soul agreeing to commit sin, not one of the parts being able to act with soundness (just as is the case in an evil affecting the whole people), so as to heal those that are sick; but even the physicians being diseased as well as their patients, whom the pestilential disease has overwhelmed and weighs down under a confessed calamity.

Of this great evil, that great deluge described by the lawgiver is an image; for the torrents from heaven continually pouring down cataracts of wickedness itself with impetuous violence, and springs from the ground (by which I mean the body) continually bursting up and pouring forth streams of every passion in great numbers and vast size, which, uniting and being mingled in the same stream with the other waters, are thrown into confusion, and overthrow the whole region of the soul which has received them with incessant eddies and whirlpools. "For," says Moses, "the Lord God,

seeing that the wickedness of men were multiplied upon the earth, and that every one did think continually in his heart nothing but evil all his days, determined to punish man" (and here by man I understand the mind, together with all the reptiles and winged creatures, and all the rest of the multitude of wild animals which surround him), by reason of his incurable wickedness; and the punishment which God decided upon was the deluge. For there was unbounded freedom in sinning, and unlimited licence in doing wrong, no one hindering it, but all restraints being shamelessly broken down in such a way that there was no fear left behind to restrain those who were thoroughly ready to snatch at abundant supplies for enjoyment of every kind. And may we not say that this was natural? For it was not only one portion of the soul which was corrupted in such a way that it could still be preserved by the sound condition of the other parts; but there was no part whatever of it which was left free from disease or from corruption. For the incorruptible Judge, says Moses, seeing that every thought of man's heart (not one single idea by itself) was evil continually, inflicted upon him a deserved punishment.

VIII. These are they who "made a treaty with one another in the valley of Salt."* For the region of the vices and of the passions is a hollow valley, rough, and full of ravines; truly salt, and producing bitter pains; and their treaty, as one that was not worthy of being confirmed by any oath or by any libation, the wise Abraham, who knew the character of it, annulled. For it is said in the scripture that, "All these men made a treaty at the valley of Salt, that is the sea of Salt." Do you not perceive that they who are barren of wisdom and blinded as to the intellect which it would be natural to expect should be sharp-sighted, having the name of Sodomites from their real character," did, with all their people united together, from young to old, surround the house in a circle."† (that is to say, the house of the soul), in order to pollute and contaminate those strangers from a foreign land, who had been received in hospitality, namely, sacred and holy reasons, the guards and defenders of the soul; no one whatever attempting either to resist those wrong doers, or to avoid doing wrong himself? For Moses does not speak of some as having consented and of others having stood aloof; but, as he says, "The whole

* Genesis xiv. 3. † Genesis xix. 4.

people surrounded the house all together, both old and young," having entered into a conspiracy against all those holy actions and words which it is customary to call angels.

IX. But Moses, the prophet of God, will meet them and check them though they come on with exceeding boldness; even though, placing in the front him who is the boldest and the most forward and able speaker among them as their king, namely speech, they rush on with one impulse, hoping to increase their strength as they go on, and overflowing like a river; "For behold," says Moses, "the king of Egypt is coming to the water; but do thou go to meet him, and stand on the bank of the river."* Therefore the wicked man goes forth to the stream of iniquities and passions, and all collected evils, which are here likened to water; but the wise man first obtains from God, who always stands firm, an honour akin to his undeviating, and in all respects and under all circumstances, unchangeable power; for we read in the scripture, "But do thou stand here with me,"† that having laid aside doubt and vacillation, the dispositions of an infirm soul, he may put on that most steadfast and trustworthy disposition, faith. In the next place, even while standing still, he (which seems a most extraordinary thing) goes forward to meet him; for it is said to him, "Thou shalt stand meeting him," and yet to go to meet is a part of motion, while to stand still is regarded as characteristic of tranquillity.

But the prophet does not here say things which are inconsistent, but rather such as are exceedingly in accordance with nature; for the man whose mind is naturally disposed to be tranquil, and is established undeviatingly, must necessarily be at variance with all those who delight in disorder and confusion, and who by artificial storms seek to disturb him who is capable of enjoying tranquillity.

X. It is very appropriately said that the meeting took place on the bank of the river; but the banks are also called the lips, and the lips are the boundaries of the mouth, and are a sort of fence to the tongue, through which the stream of discourse is borne, when it begins to be uttered; but those who hate virtue and who love learning, use speech as their ally for the exposition of doctrines which are disapproved; and again on the other hand, virtuous men employ it for the

* Exodus vii. 15. † Deuteronomy v. 31.

refutation of such doctrines, and for establishing the irresistible strength of the better and true wisdom. When then, after having had recourse to every expedient of contentious doctrines, men are destroyed, being overwhelmed by the opposing violence of contrary arguments, then the wise man will very justly and suitably establish a most sacred chorus, and melodiously sing a triumphal song; "For," says Moses, "Israel saw the Egyptians," not dead in any other place, but "on the bank (χεῖλος) of the river;"* meaning here by death, not the separation of the soul from the body, but the impetuous onset of unholy doctrines and assertions, which men utter by the mouth, and tongue, and the other organs of speech.

But the death of speech is silence, not that silence which well-bred people cultivate, making it a symbol of modesty—for this silence is itself a faculty and a sister of that one which is developed in speech, arranging what is to be said with reference to time—but that silence which the sick and the weary against their will endure, on account of the strength of their antagonists, because they cannot find any handle to answer them; for whatever they touch slips away from them, and whatever thing they seek to take their stand on does not remain, so that they of necessity fall before they stand, like that hydrostatic machine called the helix; for in the middle of that engine there are some steps, which the husbandman when he desires to water his fields mounts up upon, but is rolled round of necessity, and in order to avoid falling he is continually catching at the nearest firm thing that he can lay his hands on, which he takes hold of and so supports his whole body; for instead of his hands he uses his feet, and instead of his feet he uses his hands; for he stands on his hands, by means of which, actions are usually done, and he acts with his feet on which it is natural to stand.

XI. But many, who are not able vigorously to refute the plausible inventions of the sophists, because they have not very much practised discussion by reason of their continued application to action, have taken refuge in the alliance of the only wise Being, and have besought him to become their defender. As one of the friends of Moses, when praying, says in his hymns, "Let the treacherous lips become mute;"† and how can they become mute if they are not curbed by the only

* Exodus xiv. 30. † Psalm xxx. 19.

being who has speech itself as his subject? We must therefore flee, without ever turning back, from all associations entered into for the purposes of sin; but the alliance made with the companions of wisdom and knowledge must be confirmed. In reference to which I admire those who say, "We are all one man's sons, we are men of peace,"* because of their well-adapted agreement; since how, I should say, could you, O excellent men, avoid being grieved at war, and delighted in peace, being the sons of one and the same father, and he not mortal but immortal, the man of God, who being the reason of the everlasting God, is of necessity himself also immortal?

For they who make out many beginnings of the origin of the soul, being devoted to the evil which is called polytheism, and turning each individual of them, to the honour of different beings, have caused great confusion and dissension both at home and abroad, from the beginning of their birth to the end of their life, filling life with irreconcilable quarrels; but they who rejoice in one kind alone, and who honour one as their father, namely right reason, admiring the well-arranged and all-musical harmony of the virtues, live a tranquil and peaceful life, not an inactive and ignoble one, as some persons think, but one of great manliness, and sharpened, and vigorous against those who endeavour to break the confederacy which they have formed, and who are always studying to bring about a violation of the oaths which have been taken; for it has come to pass that the men of peace have become men of war, sitting down to attack and to oppose those who seek to overturn the firmness of the soul.

XII. And there is testimony in support of this assertion of mine; first of all, in the disposition of every lover of virtue which acknowledges these inclinations; and secondly, in that comrade of the band of the prophets, who being inspired with a sacred frenzy, spoke thus, "O my mother, how hast thou brought me forth, a man of war, and a man of disquietude to all the earth! I have not benefited them, and they have not benefited me; nor is my strength free from their curses."† But is not every wise man of necessity an irreconcilable enemy to all wicked men, not indeed using the apparatus of triremes or warlike engines, or arms, or soldiers, for his defence, but reasons? For when he sees war stirred up in the midst

* Genesis xlii. 11. † Jeremiah xv. 10.

of tranquil peace, so as to be continued and incessant among all men, both public and private, not existing only among nations and countries, and cities and villages, but also in every house, and between each particular individual; who is there who does not reproach and admonish and seek to correct the foolish men whom he sees, and not by day only, but also by night, his soul being unable to remain tranquil by reason of the hatred of wickedness implanted in his nature?

For they do in peace every thing that is done in war; they plunder, they ravage, they drag into slavery, they carry off booty, they lay waste, they behave insolently, they assault, they destroy, they pollute, they murder treacherously, they murder openly if they are the more powerful; for every one of them, proposing to himself riches or glory as his object, aims all the actions of his life as so many arrows at it, and neglects equality, and pursues inequality, and repudiates associations, and labours to acquire to himself all the possessions together properly belonging to every one; he is a misanthrope and a hater of all his fellows, making a hypocritical pretence of benevolence, being a companion of a bastard kind of flattery, an enemy of genuine friendship, a foe to truth, a champion of falsehood, slow to do good, swift to do injury, very ready to calumniate, very slow to defend, clever at deceiving, most perjured, most faithless, a slave of anger, yielding to pleasure, a guardian of all that is evil, a destroyer of all that is good.

XIII. These and other similar gifts are the most desirable treasures of peace, that blessing so celebrated and so admired, which the mind of each individual among the foolish men sets up for itself as an image, and admires and worships; at whom, very naturally, every wise man is grieved, and is accustomed to say to his mother and nurse, wisdom, "O mother, what a person hast thou brought me forth!" not in strength of body, but in energy and courage, a determined hater of wickedness, a man of disquietude and battle, by nature peaceful, and, on this very account, an enemy to those who pollute the desirable beauty of peace. "I have done no good to them, nor have they done any good to me;" nor have they even derived any advantage from my good things, nor have I from their evil things; but according to the word of Moses, "I have received no desirable thing from any one of them,"* in-

* Numbers xvi. 15.

asmuch as I look upon as exceedingly pernicious every object of their desire, which they treasure up in their hearts as the greatest possible advantage; "Nor has my strength failed by reason of the curses which they laid upon me;"* but embracing the divine doctrines with my most earnest power, I was not wearied so as to give up, but rather I vigorously reproached those who cursed me from their hearts.

For God made us to be a contradiction to our neighbours, as is said in my hymns, meaning all of us who aim at right reason: but are not all those people naturally fond of contradiction who have a zeal for knowledge and virtue, being always at variance with the neighbours of their soul, reproving the pleasures which live in union with them, and reproving the appetites which have the same abode, and looking morosely at acts of cowardice and fear, and the whole body of passions and vices?

Reproving then every outward sense, the eyes for what they saw, and the ears for what they heard, and the sense of smell for the smells that presented themselves to it, the taste for the flavours which were subjected to it, and moreover the touch for its various powers developed in the body, with reference to the peculiarities which come under its notice; and even uttered speech for the matters which it may have chosen to discuss; for what the outward sense has perceived, or how it has done so, or why, or what speech has uttered, or how or why, or in what manner, and how and why passion has disposed men, it is worth while to investigate in no superficial manner, and to examine each of the errors into which they fall; but he who contradicts none of these things, but who assents to every one of them in succession, without being aware of it, is deceiving himself, and building up troublesome neighbours for his soul, which he had better have as subjects than as rulers; for as rulers they will do him manifold and great injury, since folly reigns among them; but as subjects they will serve him obediently in suitable matters, and will not at all raise their heads in arrogance, as they will if they are rulers.

Thus, indeed, while some are learning to be subjects, and others are obtaining authority, not by knowledge only but also by power, all the body-guards and champions of the soul, that

* Psalm lxxix. 7.

is to say, its reasonings will keep them in order, and coming to that which is most important among them will say, "Thy children have taken the sum of the men that are warriors among us, and there is not one of them who has disagreed;"* but like musical instruments, skilfully tuned in all their tones, so we sound in harmony in all our explanations, neither uttering any word nor doing any action which shall be unmelodious or discordant, that we may by the contrast show, that the other company of unlettered men is, in all respects, voiceless and dead, and an object of deserved ridicule, namely, that nourishment of the corporeal parts, Midian, and that his offspring too, that mass of skins, whose name is Belphegor, is asleep; "for we are of the race of picked men of Israel, that sees God, of whom not one has disagreed;"† that the instrument of the universe, the whole world, may be melodiously sounded in musical harmony.

On this account Moses says that the "reward of peace" ‡ was given to the very war-like reason, which is called Phinehas; because, having received a zeal for virtue, and having taken up war against vice, he cut up the whole of generation; and in the second place, to all those who are willing, after a careful examination and investigation, using their eyes in preference to their ears as a trustworthy witness, to believe that the human race is full of infidelity, depending solely on opinion. Therefore the afore-mentioned agreement is admirable; and most admirable of all is that common one which exceeds all the harmonies of all the others, according to which the whole people is represented as saying with one accord, "All the things which God has spoken, we will obey and do."§ For these men no longer obey reason as their ruler, but God, the governor of the universe, by whom they are assisted so as to display their energies in actions rather than in words. For when they hear of others doing such and such things, these men, which is a thing most contrary to what one would expect, say that, from some inspiration of God, they will act first and obey afterwards; in order that they may seem to have advanced to good actions, not in consequence of instruction and admonition, but by their own spontaneous and self-taught mind. And then, when they have accomplished these actions, they say

* Numbers xxxi. 49.
† Exodus xxiv. 11.
‡ Numbers xxv. 12.
§ Deuteronomy v. 27.

that they will obey in order that they may form an opinion of what they have done, as to whether their actions are consistent with the divine injunctions and the sacred admonitions of scripture.

XIV. But those who conspired to commit injustice, he says, "having come from the east, found a plain in the land of Shinar, and dwelt there;"* speaking most strictly in accordance with nature. For there is a twofold kind of dawning in the soul, the one of a better sort, the other of a worse. That is the better sort, when the light of the virtues shines forth like the beams of the sun; and that is the worse kind, when they are overshadowed, and the vices show forth. Now, the following is an example of the former kind: "And God planted a paradise in Eden, toward the east,"† not of terrestrial but of celestial plants, which the planter caused to spring up from the incorporeal light which exists around him, in such a way as to be for ever inextinguishable.

I have also heard of one of the companions of Moses having uttered such a speech as this: "Behold, a man whose name is the East!"‡ A very novel appellation indeed, if you consider it as spoken of a man who is compounded of body and soul; but if you look upon it as applied to that incorporeal being who in no respect differs from the divine image, you will then agree that the name of the east has been given to him with great felicity. For the Father of the universe has caused him to spring up as the eldest son, whom, in another passage, he calls the firstborn; and he who is thus born, imitating the ways of his father, has formed such and such species, looking to his archetypal patterns.

XV. But an example of the worse kind of dawning is afforded by the words used by the man who was willing "to curse the people who were blessed by God."§ For he also is represented as dwelling in the east. And this dawning, having the same name as the former one, has nevertheless an opposite nature to it, and is continually at war with it. For Balaam says, "Balak sent for me out of Mesopotamia, from the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me the people whom God doth not curse." But the name of Balak, being interpreted means, "void of sense;" a very felicitous name.

* Genesis xi. 2.
† Genesis ii. 8.
‡ Zechariah vi. 12.
§ Numbers xxiii. 7.

For how can it be otherwise than shocking to hope to deceive the living God, and to turn aside his most enduring and firmly established counsels by the sophistical devices of men? On this account he is represented as living in Mesopotamia, for his mind is overwhelmed as in the middle of the depth of the river, and is not able to emerge and to swim away. And this condition is the dawning of folly and the setting of sound reason.

They, then, who are tuned in an inharmonious symphony are said to be moved from the east. Is this, then, the east according to wickedness? But the dawning in accordance with virtue is described as a complete separation, and the motion from the dawning according to vice is a united one, as when the hands are moved, not separately and disjunctively, but in a certain harmony and connection with the whole body. For folly is to the wicked man the beginning of his energy in the works which are contrary to nature, that is, of his approach to the region of wickedness. But all those who have quitted the region of virtue, and have set forth to go over to folly, have found a most appropriate place in which they dwell, which is called in the Hebrew language Shinar. And Shinar in Greek, is called "shaking;" for the whole life of the wicked is shaken, and agitated, and torn to pieces, being always kept in a state of commotion and confusion, and having no trace of any genuine good laid up in itself. For as everything which is not held together by close union, falls out of what is violently shaken, in the very same manner, it seems to me, that the soul is shaken of every man who associates with others for the purpose of doing wrong; for he casts away every appearance of good, so that no shadow or image of it ever appears.

XVI. Accordingly, the body-loving race of the Egyptians is represented as fleeing, not from the water, but "under the water," that is to say, beneath the impetuous speed of the passions. And when it has once placed itself under the power of the passions, it is shaken and agitated; it casts away the stable and peaceful qualities of virtue, and takes up in their stead the turbulent and confused character of wickedness; for it is said that "God shook the Egyptians in the middle of the sea, fleeing under the water." * These are they who

* Exodus xiv. 27.

neither knew Joseph—the diversified pride of life—but who, having their sins revealed, have not received any trace, or shade, or image of goodness and excellence. For, says Moses, "Another king arose over the Egyptians who knew not Joseph,"* the latest and most modern good perceptible by the outward senses, who utterly destroyed not only the perfections but even all improvements, and all the energy which can be exerted by the sight, and all the teaching which can be implanted by means of the hearing, saying, "Come, curse me Jacob; and come, defy Israel for me:"† an expression which is equivalent to, Destroy both these things, the sight and the hearing of the soul, that it may neither see nor hear any true and genuine good thing; for Israel is the emblem of seeing and Jacob of hearing. Accordingly the mind of such persons rejects the whole nature of good, being in some degree shaken; and, on the other hand, the mind of good persons, setting up a claim to the unmingled and unalloyed ideas of good things, shakes off and discards all that is evil.

Consider, therefore, what the practiser of virtue says: "Take up the foreign gods that are among you from out of the midst of you, and purify yourselves, and change your garments, and rise up and let us go to Bethel;"‡ in order that, even if Laban should demand a power of examining, the images might not be found in his whole house, but only such things as have a real subsistence and essence, being fixed like pillars in the mind of the wise man, which the self-taught offspring Isaac has received as his inheritance; for he alone receives his father's substance as his inheritance."§

XVII. And take notice that Moses does not say that they came unto a plain in which they remain, but that they "found" one, having searched around in every direction, and having considered what might be the most suitable region for folly; for in reality every foolish man does not take from another for himself, but he seeks for and finds evils, not being content only with those which wicked nature proceeds towards of its own accord, but also adding thereto such perfect skill in evil as arises from constant practice in contriving wrong. And I wish indeed that after he had remained there a brief time he had changed his abode; but even now he thinks fit to remain,

* Exodus i. 8.
† Numbers xxiii. 7
‡ Genesis xxxv. 2.
§ Genesis xxv. 5.

for it is said that having found the plain they dwelt there; having settled there as if in their own country and not as if in a foreign land; for it would have been less terrible for men who had fallen in with wicked actions to look upon them as strange and foreign to them, and not to consider that they had any kindred or connection with them. For if they had looked upon themselves as sojourners among them, they would have changed their abode at a subsequent time, but now having settled fixedly among them they were likely to dwell there for ever.

For this reason all the wise men mentioned in the books of Moses are represented as sojourners, for their souls are sent down from heaven upon earth as to a colony; and on account of their fondness for contemplation, and their love of learning, they are accustomed to migrate to the terrestrial nature. Since therefore having taken up their abode among bodies, they behold all the mortal objects of the outward senses by their means, they then subsequently return back from thence to the place from which they set out at first, looking upon the heavenly country in which they have the rights of citizens as their native land, and as the earthly abode in which they dwell for a while as in a foreign land.

For to those who are sent to be the inhabitants of a colony, the country which has received them is in place of their original mother country; but still the land which has sent them forth remains to them as the house to which they desire to return. Therefore, very naturally, Abraham says to the guardians of the dead and to the arrangers of mortal affairs, after he has forsaken that life which is only dead and the tomb, "I am a stranger and a sojourner among you,"* but ye are natives of the country, honouring the dust and earth more than the soul, thinking the name Ephron worthy of precedence, for Ephron, being interpreted, means "a mound" and naturally, Jacob, the practiser of virtue, bewails his being a sojourner in the body, saying, "The days of the years of my life which I spend here as a sojourner have been few and evil; they have not come up to the days of my fathers which they spent as sojourners."† But to him who was self-taught the following injunction of scripture was given, "Do not go down," says the scripture, "to Egypt," that is to say to passion; "but dwell in this land

* Genesis xxiii. 4. † Genesis xlvii. 9.

land which I will tell thee of,"* namely, in the incorporeal wisdom which cannot be pointed out to the eye; and be a sojourner in this land, the substance which can be pointed out and appreciated by the external sense. And this is said with a view to show, that the wise man is a sojourner in a foreign land, that is to say in the body perceptible by the outward senses, who dwells among the virtues appreciable by the intellect as in his native land, which virtues God utters as in no way differing from the divine word. But Moses says, "I am a sojourner in a foreign land;" speaking with peculiar fitness, looking upon his abode in the body not only as a foreign land, as sojourners do, but also as a land from which one ought to feel alienated, and never look upon it as one's home.

XVIII. But the wicked man, desiring to exhibit the fact that identity of language, and the sameness of dialect does not consist more in names and common words than in his participation in iniquitous actions, begins to build a city and a tower as a citadel for sovereign wickedness; and he invites all his fellow revellers to partake in his enterprise, preparing beforehand abundance of suitable materials. For, "Come," says he, "let us make bricks, and let us bake them in the fire," an expression equivalent to, Now we have all the parts of the soul mingled together and in a state of confusion, so that there is no species whatever the form of which is evident to be seen. Therefore it will be consistent with these beginnings that, as we have assumed a certain essence destitute of all particular species; and of all distinctive qualities, and have also taken up with passion and vice, we should also divide it into suitable qualities, and keep on reducing the proximate to the ultimate species; and with a view to the more distinct comprehension of them, and also to this employment and enjoyment of them combined with experience, which appears to produce many pleasures and delights.

Come, therefore, all ye reasonings of counsellors, in some way or the other to the assembly of the soul; come, all ye who meditate the destruction of justice and of all virtue, and let us consider carefully how we may attain to the end which we desire. Now of success in this matter these will be the most established foundations: to give to things without form shape

* Genesis xxvi. 9 † Exodus ii. 29.

and character, and to distinguish each thing separately with distinct outlines, lest, if they become shaken and lame (though fixed on firm foundations,) and if they have assumed a connection with the nature of a quadrangular shape, (for this is a nature always unshaken), they may then, being established steadily like a building of brick, support even those things which are built upon them.

XIX. Of such a structure as this every mind adverse to God, which we call the king of Egypt (that is to say of the body), is found to be the maker. For Moses represents the mind as rejoicing in the buildings made of brick; for after some being or other made the two substances of water and earth to be the one dry and the other solid, and mingling the two together, for they were easily dissoluble and corruptible, made a third substance to be on the confines of the two, which is called clay, he has never ceased from dissecting this into small portions, giving its own appropriate figure to each of the fragments, in order that they might be very well compacted together, and very suitable to the objects for which they were intended. For in this way what was being made was sure to be very easily perfected.

Imitating this work, those men who are wicked in their natures, when they mingle the irrational and extravagant impulses of the passions with the most grievous vices, are, in reality, dissecting that which has been combined into various species, and unhappy that they are fashioning them again and reducing them into shape, by means of which the blockade of the soul will be raised on high; these being, in fact, the divisions of the outward sense into seeing, and hearing, and taste, and smell, and touch. Passion, again, is divided into pleasure, and appetite, and fear, and grief; and the universal genus of vices is divided into folly, and intemperance, and cowardice, and injustice, and all the other vices which are akin to or closely connected with them.

XX. And before now some persons, even more excessively extravagant in wickedness than these, have not only prepared their own souls for such actions, but have also put a force upon those of a superior class and of the genus which is endowed with acuteness of vision, and have "compelled them to make bricks and to build strong cities"* for the mind, which has ap-

* Exodus i. 11.

peared to occupy the place of king, wishing to point out this fact, that what is good is the slave of what is evil, and that subjection to the passions is more powerful than tranquillity of soul, and prudence, and all virtue is, but, as it were, a subject of folly and all wickedness, so as of necessity to minister in all the matters which the master power enjoins; for behold, says Moses, the most pure, and brilliant, and far-sighted eye of the soul, to which alone it is permitted to behold God, by name Israel, being formerly bound in the corporeal nets of Egypt, endures severe commands, so as to be compelled to make bricks and all sorts of things of clay with the most grievous and intolerable labours, at which it is very naturally pained, and at which it groans, having laid up this, as it were, to be its only treasure amid its evils, the power of bewailing its present distresses

For it is said, very correctly, that "the children of Israel groaned by reason of their tasks."* And what man in his senses is there who, if he saw the tasks of the generality of men, and the exceeding earnestness with which they labour at the pursuits to which they are accustomed to devote themselves, whether it be the acquisition of money, or glory, or the enjoyment of pleasure, would not be greatly concerned and cry out to God, the only Saviour, that he would lighten their labours, and pay a ransom and price for the salvation of the soul, so as to emancipate and deliver it?

What, then, is the surest freedom? The service of the only wise God, as the scriptures testify, in which it is said, "Send forth the people, that they may serve me."† But it is a peculiar property of those who serve the living God neither to regard the works of cup-bearers, or bakers, or cooks, or any other earthly employments, nor to trouble themselves about arranging or adorning their bodies like bricks, but to mount up with their reason to the height of heaven, having elected Moses, the type of the race which loves God, to be the guide of their path; for then "they will see the place which is visible,"‡ on which the unchangeable and unalterable God stands; and the footstool beneath his feet, which is, as it were, a work of sapphire stone, and, as it were, a resemblance to the firmament of heaven, namely, the world perceptible by the outward senses, which he describes allegorically by these figures. For it is very suitable for those who have made an association for

* Exodus ii. 23. † Exodus viii. 1. ‡ Exodus xxiv. 10.

the purpose of learning to desire to see him; and, if they are unable to do that, at least to see his image, the most sacred word, and, next to that, the most perfect work of all the things perceptible by the outward senses, namely, the world? For to philosophise is nothing else but to desire to see these things accurately.

XXI. But he says that the world perceptible to the outward senses is, as it were, the footstool of God on this account: first of all, that he may show that there is no efficient cause in the creatures; secondly, for the purpose of displaying that even the whole world has not a free and unrestrained spontaneous motion of its own, but God, the ruler of the universe, takes his stand upon it, regulating it and directing everything in a saving manner by the helm of his wisdom, using, in truth, neither hands nor feet, nor any other part whatever such as belongs to created objects; for God is not as man, but the reason why we at times represent him as such, for the sake of instruction, is because we are unable to advance out of ourselves, but derive our apprehension of the uncreate God from the circumstances with which we ourselves are surrounded.

And it is very beautifully said by Moses, in the form of a parable, when he speaks of the world as if it resembled a brick; for the world appears to stand and to be firmly fixed like a brick in a house, as far as the vision of the sight of the outward senses can inform us, but it has a very swift motion, and one which is able to outstrip all particular motions. For the eyes of our body look upon the appearance of the sun by day and of the moon by night as standing still, and yet who is there who does not know that the rapidity of movements of these two bodies is incomparable, since they go round the whole heaven in one day? Thus, indeed, the universal heaven itself also, while appearing to stand still, revolves in a circle; its movement being detected and comprehended by the invisible and more divine eye which is placed in our mind.

XXII. And they are represented as baking the bricks in the fire, for the purpose of intimating by this symbolical expression that they are strengthened and hardened as to their vices and their passions by warm and most energetic reason, so that they can never be overthrown by the body-guards of wisdom, by whom engines for their defeat are being continually put in operation. On which account we have this further statement

also made, "Their brick was to them for stone;" for the weak and lax character of that impetuosity which is not in company with reason, when it is closely pressed and condensed so as to assume a nature capable of solidity and resistance, owes this change to powerful reasons and most convincing demonstrations; the comprehension of such speculatious being, in a manner, endowed with manliness and vigour, which comprehensions, while in a tender age, melt away by reason of the mixture of the soul, which is not as yet able to consolidate and preserve the character impressed upon it.

"And they had slime for mortar;" not, on the contrary, mortar for slime. For the wicked appear to strengthen and fortify what is weak against what is more powerful, and from their own resources to consolidate and preserve what melts and flows away from such things, in order that they may aim and shoot at virtue from a safe place. But the merciful God and father of the good will not permit their buildings to be established in indissoluble safety, their work of melting zeal not being able to withstand, but becoming like soft mud.

For, if their clay had become mortar, then perchance that earthy thing perceptible by the outward senses, which is for ever and ever in a continued state of flux, would have been able to arrive at a safe and unalterable power; but since, on the contrary, their mortar became mere slime, we must not despair, for there is in this, certain hope that the strong fortifications of vice may be overthrown by the might of God. Therefore the just man, even in the great and incessant deluge of life, while he is not as yet able to see things really as they are by the energy of his soul alone without the assistance of the outward sense, will anoint "the ark," by which I understand the body, "both within and without with pitch,"* strengthening his imaginations and energies by his own resources; but when the danger has ceased and the violence of the flood abated, then he will come forth, availing himself of his incorporeal mind for the comprehension of truth.

For the good disposition being from the very birth of the man planted in virtue, and being spoken of as such, its name being Moses, dwelling in the whole world as his native city and country, becoming, as it were, a cosmopolite, being bound up in the body, smeared over as with "bitumen and pitch,"†

* Genesis vi. 14.

† Exodus ii. 3.

and appearing to be able to receive and to contain in security all the imaginations of all things which might be subjected to the outward senses, weeps* at being so bound up, being overwhelmed with a desire for an incorporeal nature. And he weeps over the miserable mind of men in general as being wandering and puffed up with pride, inasmuch as, being elated with false opinion, it thinks that it has in itself something firm and safe, and, as a general fact, that there something immutable in some creature or other, though the example of perpetual stability, which is at all times the same, is set up in God alone.

XXIII. And the expression, "Come, and let us build ourselves a city and a tower, the top of which shall reach to heaven," has such a meaning as this concealed beneath it: the lawgiver does not conceive that those only are cities which are built upon the earth, the materials of which are wood and stone, but he thinks that there are other cities also which men bear about with them, being built in their souls; and these are, as is natural, the archetypes and models of the others, inasmuch as they have received a more divine building, and the others are but imitations of them, as consisting of perishable substances.

But there are two species of cities, the one better, the other worse. That is the better which enjoys a democratic government, a constitution which honours equality, the rulers of which are law and justice; and such a constitution as this is a hymn to God. But that is the worse kind which adulterates this constitution, just as base and clipped money is adulterated in the coinage, being, in fact, ochlocracy, which admires inequality, in which injustice and lawlessness bear sway. Now good men are enrolled as citizens in the constitution of the first-mentioned kind of city; but the multitude of the wicked clings to the other and worse sort, loving disorder more than orderliness, and confusion rather than well-established steadiness.

And the wicked man seeks for coadjutors in his practice of wickedness, not looking upon himself as sufficient by himself. And he exhorts the sight, and he exhorts the hearing, and he exhorts every outward sense in succession, to range itself on his side without delay, and every one of them to bring to him

* Exodus ii. 6.

all things necessary for his service. And he raises up and sharpens all the rest of the company of the passions, which are by their own nature unmanageable, in order that by the addition of practice and care they may become irresistible. The mind, therefore, having called in these allies, says, "Let us build ourselves a city;" an expression equivalent to, Let us fortify our own things; let us fence them around to the best of our power, so that we may not be easily taken by those who attack us; let us divide and distribute, as into tribes and boroughs, each of the powers existing in the soul, allotting some to the rational part, and some to the irrational part; let us choose competent rulers, wealth, glory, honour, pleasure, by means of which we may be able to become masters of everything; banishing to a distance justice, the invariable cause of poverty and ingloriousness; and let us enact laws, which shall confirm the chief power and advantage to those who are always able to get the better of others.

And let a tower be built in this city as a citadel, to be a strong palace for the tyrant vice, whose feet shall walk upon the earth, and its head shall, through pride, be raised to such a height as to reach even to heaven; for, in good truth, it rests not only upon human sins, but it also hastens forward as far as heaven, pushing up its words of impiety and ungodliness, since it either speaks of God so as to assert that he has no existence, or that, though he exists, he has no providence, or to affirm that the world had no beginning of creation, or that, admitting that it has been created, it is borne on by unsteady causes, just as chance may direct, at one time wrongly, at another time in an irreproachable manner, just as often happens in the case of chariots or ships. For sometimes the voyage of a ship, or the course of a chariot, goes on properly even without charioteers or pilots; but success is not only now and then owing to providences, but very often to human prudence and invariably to divine, since error is admitted to be altogether incompatible with divine power. Now what object can the foolish men have who, speaking figuratively, build up the reasonings of wickedness like a tower, except the desire of leaving behind them a name which shall be far from a good name?

XXIV. For they say, "Let us make for ourselves a name." O, the excessive and profligate impudence of such a saying! What say ye? When ye ought to seek to bury

your iniquities under night and profound darkness, and to assume as a veil for them, shame, if not genuine, at all events pretended shame, whether for the sake of gaining favour in the eyes of the moderate and virtuous, or for that of avoiding punishment for admitted wickedness; do ye, nevertheless, proceed to such a pitch of audacity, as all but to come forth and display yourselves in the light and in the most brilliant beams of the sun, and to fear neither the threats of better men, nor the implacable justice of God, which impends over such ungodly and desperate men? But ye think fit even to send around in every direction reports, to carry intelligence of your domestic iniquities, in order that no one may be uninformed of or unacquainted with your deeds of daring wickedness, wretched and infamous men that ye are.

What name, therefore, do ye wish to assume? Is it the one which is most suitable to your actions? But is there not one name only which is suited to them? It may, perhaps, be one in genus; but there are ten thousand such names in species, which you will hear from others, even if ye keep silence yourselves. The names adapted to your conduct are, rashness united with shamelessness, insolence combined with violence, violence in union with homicide, corruption in combination with adultery, undefined appetite accompanied by unmeasured indulgence in pleasures, folly joined with impudence, injustice united to crafty wickedness, theft combined with rapine, perjury united with lying, impiety combined with utter lawlessness. Such, and similar to these, are the names of such actions. And it is well for them to boast over and pride themselves, upon seeking for reputation from actions which it would be more seemly to hide and to be ashamed of.

And, indeed, some persons do pride themselves on these things, thinking that in consequence of them they do derive a certain irresistible degree of power among men from this idea being entertained respecting them; but they will not escape the divine vengeance for their enormous audacity, and very soon they will have occasion not only to anticipate at a distance, but even to see immediately impending their own death. For they say, "Before we are dispersed, let us have a care for our name and our glory." Should I not then say to them, Ye know that ye will be dispersed? Why, then, do ye commit iniquity?

But perhaps he is here placing before us the manner of

foolish men who, even when the very greatest punishments are not obscurely impending over them, but are often visibly threatening them, nevertheless do not hesitate to commit iniquity. And the punishments, however they may seem to be concealed, are in reality most notorious, which are inflicted by God. For all the most wicked of men adopt ideas that they can never escape the knowledge of the deity when doing wrong, and that they shall never be able to ward off altogether the day of retribution. Since otherwise, how do they know that they will be dispersed? And yet they say, "Before we are dispersed." But their conscience, which is within, convicts them, and pricks them vehemently, when devoting themselves to ungodliness, so as to draw them against their will to a confession that all the circumstances affecting men are overlooked by a superior nature, and that justice is watching above, as an incorruptible chastiser, hating the unjust actions of the impious, and the reasonings and speeches which undertake their defence.

XXV. But all these men are the offspring of that wickedness which is always dying but which never dies, the name of which is Cain. Is not Cain represented as having begotten a son whom he called Enoch,* and as building a city to which he gave the same name, and as after a fashion building up created and mortal things to the destruction of those things which have received a more divine formation? For the name Enoch, being interpreted, means "thy grace." But every impious man supposes that what he thinks and understands is owing to the bounty of his intellect towards him; that what he sees is the gift of his eyes to him, what he hears of his ears, what he smells of his nostrils, and so that each of his outward senses bestows on him those perceptions which are in accordance with them. Again, that it is the organs of the voice which endow him with the capacity of speaking, and that there is actually no such thing as a God at all, or at all events that he is not the primary cause of things.

Because of these views he assigns to himself the first fruits of the fruits which he extracts from the earth by his husbandry, being contented afterwards to offer to God some of the fruit, and that too though he has a sound example at hand; for his brother offers a sacrifice of the offspring of the flock, offer-

* Genesis iv. 17.

ing the firstborn, and not those which are of secondary value; confessing that the eldest causes of all existing things are suited to the eldest and first cause. But the impious man thinks exactly the contrary, namely, that the mind is endowed with absolute power to do whatever it desires, and that the outward senses have absolute power as to all that they feel, for that both the mind and the outward senses decide in an irreproachable and unerring manner, the one on bodies, and the other on everything. Now what can be more open to blame, or more capable of conviction by truth, than such ideas as these? Has not the mind been repeatedly convicted of innumerable acts of folly? And have not all the outward senses been convicted of bearing false witness, and that too not by irrational judges who, it is natural to suppose, may be deceived, but before the tribunal of nature herself, which it is impossible to corrupt or to pervert?

And indeed as the criteria both of our mind and of our outward senses are liable to error respecting even ourselves, it follows of necessity that we must make the corresponding confession that God sheds upon the mind the power of intellect, and on the outward senses the faculty of apprehension, and that these benefits are conferred upon us not by our own members but by him to whom also we owe our existence.

XXVI. The children who have received from their father the inheritance of self-love are eager to go on increasing up to heaven, until justice, which loves virtue and hates iniquity, coming destroys their cities which they have built up by the side of their miserable souls, and the tower the name of which is displayed in the book which is entitled the Book of Judgment. And the name is, as the Hebrews say, Phanuel, which translated into our language means, "turning away from God." For any strong building which is erected by means of plausible arguments is not built for the sake of any other object except that of averting and alienating the mind from the honour due to God, than which object what can be more iniquitous? But for the destruction of this strong fortification a ravager and an enemy of iniquity is prepared who is always full of hostility towards it; whom the Hebrews call Gideon; which name being interpreted means, "a retreat for robbers." "For," says Moses, "Gideon swore to the men of Phanuel, saying, On the day when I return victorious in peace,

I will overthrow this tower."* A very beautiful and most becoming boast for the soul which hates wickedness and is sharpened against the impious, namely, that it is resolved to overthrow every reasoning which by its persuasions seeks to turn the mind away from holiness, and this indeed is the natural result. For when the mind turns round, then that which turns away from it, and rejects it is again dissolved, and this is the opportunity for destroying it which (a most wonderful thing) he calls not war but peace. For, owing to the stability and firmness of the mind which piety is accustomed to produce, every reasoning which impiety has formed is overturned.

Many also have even erected the outward senses after the fashion of a tower, raising them to such a height as to be able to reach the very borders of heaven. But the term heaven is here used symbolically to signify our mind, according to which the best and most divine natures revolve. But they who dare such deeds prefer the outward senses to the intellect, and desire by means of the outward senses forcibly to destroy all the objects of intellect, compelling those things which are, at present masters to descend into the rank of servants, and raising those things which are by nature slaves to the rank of masters.

XXVII. And the statement, "The Lord went down to see that city and that tower" must be listened to altogether as if spoken in a figurative sense. For to think that the divinity can go towards, or go from, or go down, or go to meet, or, in short, that it has the same positions and motions as particular animals, and that it is susceptible of real motion at all, is, to use a common proverb, an impiety deserving of being banished beyond the sea and beyond the world. But these things are spoken, as if of man, by the lawgiver, of God who is not invested with human form, for the sake of advantage to us who are to be instructed, as I have often said before with reference to other passages. Since who is there who does not know that it is indispensable for a person who goes down, to leave one place and to occupy another? But all places are filled at once by God, who surrounds them all and is not surrounded by any of them, to whom alone it is possible to be everywhere and also nowhere. Nowhere, because he himself

* Judges viii. 9.

created place and space at the same time that he created bodies, and it is impious to say that the Creator is contained in anything that he has created.

Again, he is everywhere, because, having extended his powers so as to make them pervade earth, and water, and air, and heaven, he has left no portion of the world desolate, but, having collected everything together, he has bound them with chains which cannot be burst,* so that they are never emancipated, on which account he is especially to be praised with hymns.

For that which is higher than all powers is understood to exceed them, not merely in the fact of its existence. But the power of this being which made and arranged everything is with perfect truth called God, and it contains everything in its bosom, and pervades every portion of the universe. But the divine being, both invisible and incomprehensible, is indeed everywhere, but still, in truth, he is nowhere visible or comprehensible. But when he says, "I am he who stands before thee,"† he appears indeed to be displayed and to be comprehended, though before any exhibition or conception he was superior to all created things. Therefore, no one of the words which implies a motion from place to place is appropriate to that God who exists only in essence; such expressions, I mean, as going upwards or downwards, to the right or to the left, forwards or backwards. For he is not conceived of in any one of the above mentioned ideas, inasmuch as he never turns round or changes his place.

But, nevertheless, he is said to have come down and to have seen, he who by his foreknowledge comprehends everything, not only that has happened, but even before it happens; and this expression is used for the sake of exhortation and instruction, in order that no man, indulging in uncertain conjectures about matters which he is not present to behold may, while standing afar off, be too prompt to believe idle fancies, but that every one may come close to the facts, and examining each one separately, may carefully and thoroughly consider them. For certain sight is more deserving to be looked upon as a

* The text has δοράτοις, "invisible," but I have followed Mangey's translation, who reads ἀῤῥήκτοις. The remainder of the sentence is exceedingly corrupt.

† Exodus xvii. 6.

trustworthy witness than fallacious hearing. On which account a law has been enacted among those nations which have the most excellent constitution, that one must not give evidence on hearsay, because by its own nature the tribunal of the sense of hearing is liable to be corrupted. And Moses indeed says in the prohibitory part of his law, "Thou shalt not receive vain hearing." * Meaning not only this, that one ought not to receive false or silly reports by hearsay, but that, as far as the clear comprehension of the truth is concerned, the hearing is a long way behind the sight, being full of vanity.

XXVIII. We say that this is the reason why it is said that God went down to see the city and the tower; and the addition, "Which the sons of men had built," is not a mere superfluity. For perhaps some profanely disposed person may mock and say, "The lawgiver is here teaching us a very novel kind of lesson, when he says that no one else but the sons of men build cities and towers; for who, even of the most crazy people is ignorant of what is so evident and notorious as that?" But we must not suppose that such a plain and unquestionable fact as that, is what is intended to be conveyed by the mention of it in the holy scriptures, but rather there is some hidden meaning concealed under these apparently plain words which we must trace out. What then is this hidden meaning?

Those who, as it were, attribute many fathers to existing things, and who represent the company of the gods as numerous, displaying great ignorance of the nature of things and causing great confusion, and making pleasure the proper object of the soul, are those who are, if we must tell the plain truth, spoken of as the builders of the aforesaid city, and of the citadel in it; having increased the efficient causes of the desired end, building them up like houses, being, as I imagine, in no respect different from the children of the harlot whom the law expels from the assembly of God, where it says, "The offspring of a harlot shall not come into the assembly of the Lord." †

Because, like archers shooting at random at many objects, and not aiming skilfully or successfully at any one mark, so these men, putting forward ten thousand principles and causes for the creation of the universe, every one of which is false, display a perfect ignorance of the one Creator and Father of

* Exodus xxiii. 1. † Deuteronomy xxiii. 2.

all things; but they who have real knowledge, are properly addressed as the sons of the one God, as Moses also entitles them, where he says, "Ye are the sons of the Lord God." * And again, "God who begot thee;" † and in another place, "Is not he thy father?"

Accordingly, it is natural for those who have this disposition of soul to look upon nothing as beautiful except what is good, which is the citadel erected by those who are experienced in this kind of warfare as a defence against the end of pleasure, and as a means of defeating and destroying it. And even if there be not as yet any one who is worthy to be called a son of God, nevertheless let him labour earnestly to be adorned according to his first-born word, the eldest of his angels, as the great archangel of many names; for he is called, the authority, and the name of God, and the Word, and man according to God's image, and he who sees Israel. For which reason I was induced a little while ago to praise the principles of those who said, "We are all one man's sons." ‡ For even if we are not yet suitable to be called the sons of God, still we may deserve to be called the children of his eternal image, of his most sacred word; for the image of God is his most ancient word.

And, indeed, in many passages of the law, the children of Israel are called hearers of him that seeth, since hearing is honoured with the second rank next after the sense of sight, and since that which is in need of instruction is at all times second to that which can receive clear impressions of the subjects submitted to it without any such information. And I also admire the things which are spoken under divine inspiration in the books of Kings, according to which those who flourished many generations afterwards and lived in a blameless manner, are spoken of as the sons of David who wrote hymns to God; § though, during his lifetime, even their great grandfathers had not yet been born. The truth is, that the birth here spoken of is that of souls made immortal by their virtues, not of perishable bodies, and this birth is naturally referred to the leaders of virtue, as its parents and progenitors.

XXIX. But against those who pride themselves on injustice,

* Deuteronomy xiv. 1.
† Deuteronomy xxxii. 18.
‡ Genesis xlii. 11.
§ 2 Esr. viii. 2.

the Lord said, "Behold, there is one race and one language among them all," an expression equivalent to, Behold, there is one family and one bond of relationship, and also, one harmony and agreement among them all together, no one being in his mind at all alienated from or disconnected with his neighbour, as is the case with illiterate men. For at times, the organ of speech among them is, in all its tones, out of tune and inharmonious in no slight degree, being in fact carefully arranged so as to produce inharmoniousness, and having only such a concert as will cause a want of melody.

And in the case of fevers,* one may see very similar effects; for they are periodical changes, in some recurring every day, in others every third or every fourth day, as the sons of the physicians say; and they have also stated hours, both by day and night, at which important crises may be expected, and they at all times keep nearly the same order.

And the expression, "And they began to do this," is said with no moderate indignation, because it has not been sufficient for wicked men to confuse all the principles of justice which affect those of the same country as themselves, but they have ventured to transgress even the laws of Heaven, sowing injustice and reaping impiety. But these wretched men derive no advantage, for though those who seek to inflict mutual injuries on one another, succeed in many of the objects which they have at heart, bringing to their accomplishment in action what they have decided on in their unwise minds, yet the case is not the same with the impious. For all things belonging to the Deity are incapable of receiving either damage or injury, and the unclean can only find out the beginnings of sinning in respect of them, but can never arrive at the end which they propose to themselves; on which account this expression also occurs, "They *began* to do."

Men full of an insatiable desire of doing wrong, not being content with the crimes which they can perpetrate on earth, by sea, and in the air, inasmuch as they are of a perishable nature, have determined to array themselves against the divine natures existing in heaven; which, as they are not reckoned

* I have translated Mangey's Latin translation. He pronounces the whole passage in the original text corrupt and unintelligible. The *word translated fever is* πολιτίδος, a word manifestly corrupt.

among existing creatures are also out of all reach of injury.* Even calumny itself can inflict no injury on those things if it ventures to speak ill of them, inasmuch as they are never moved from their everlasting and eternal natures, but it inflicts incurable calamity on those who accuse it.

Are they not to be blamed, since indeed they have only begun, being unable to arrive at the end of the impiety they propose to themselves, are they not, I say, to be blamed just as much as if they had accomplished all the objects that they had in view? On this account also, Moses speaks of them as having finished the tower, though in fact they had not yet completed it, where he says, "The Lord went down to see the city and the tower," not which the sons of men were going to build, but which they had built.

XXX. What, then, is the proof that they had not entirely completed this building? First of all, the manifest notoriety of the fact. For it is impossible for even so slight a portion of the earth to touch the heaven, by reason of the cause before-mentioned, that no centre can ever touch the circumference; in the second place, because the æther (αἰθὴρ) is sacred fire and an unquenchable flame, as its very name shows, being derived from αἴθω, to burn, which is a synonymous word with καίω. And we have a witness in our favour in one portion of the heavenly system of fire, that is in the sun, who, though he is at such a distance from the earth, sends his beams down into his inmost recesses, and sometimes warms and at times even scorches the earth itself, and the air which reaches from the earth up to the heavenly sphere, though it is by nature cold: for all those things which are removed to a distance from his rapid course, or which are in an oblique direction, one side of it only warms; but those which are near to him, or in a direct line from him, is violently burnt up.

If, then, these things are so, was it not necessary that those men who were endeavouring to mount up to heaven must have been stricken with thunderbolts and burnt up, their high-minded and proud designs being unaccomplished by them? This is the meaning which Moses appears to intend to convey, figuratively, by the expressions which follow: "For they

* This passage again in the text is unintelligible, and pronounced by Mangey to be in a state of hopeless corruption.

ceased," says he, "to build the city and the tower."* Not, indeed, because they had finished their work, but because they were prevented from accomplishing it by the confusion which supervened. Nevertheless, they have not escaped blame for their actions, inasmuch as they had decided on them and attempted to carry them out.

XXXI. At all events, the law says that that soothsayer and diviner who was led into folly in respect of his unstable conjectures (for the name, Balaam, being interpreted, means unstable), "cursed the people that saw;"† and that, too, though as far as his words go he uttered only words of good omen and prayers. The law here looking not at the words he uttered, which, through the providence of God, did change their character, becoming good money instead of base coinage, but having regard to the intention in which injurious things were resolved in preference to beneficial ones. But these things are, by nature inimical to one another, conjectures being at variance with truth, and vain opinion with knowledge, and prophecy, which is not dictated by divine inspiration, being directly opposed to sober wisdom.

And even if any one, rising up as it were from his ambush, were to try, but to be unable, to slay a man, still he is none the less liable to the punishment due to homicides, as the law which is enacted about such persons shows. "For if," says the law, "any one attacks his neighbour, wishing to slay him by treachery, and escapes, thou shalt apprehend him, even at the altar, to put him to death."‡ And yet the thing condemned is the attacking with intent to kill, not the actual killing, but the law looks upon the intention to slay as equal in guilt to the actual slaying; on which account it does not grant pardon to such a man even if he supplicates for it, but bids one drag the man who has cherished so unholy a design even from the temple itself.

And such a man is unholy, not merely because he has plotted slaughter against a soul which might have lived for ever through its acquisition and use of virtue, making an attack on it through the agency of wickedness, but also because he blames God as the cause of his ungodly audacity; for the word, "escapes," has such a meaning as this concealed under it. Because many men wish to escape from accusations which

* Genesis xi. 8. † Deut. xxiii. 4. ‡ Exodus xxi. 14.

are brought against themselves, and think it fitting that they should be delivered from the punishments due to the offences which they have committed, and so they attribute their own iniquity to him who is the cause of no evil, but of all kinds of good, namely, to God; for which reason it was accounted as no violation of divine law to drag such men even from the altars themselves.

And it was an excessive punishment which was then denounced against the reasons which were thus built up and put together for purposes of impiety; which, however, perhaps some foolish persons will look upon not as injury, but as a benefit. "For," says Moses, "there shalt not fail to them any one of the things which they have endeavoured to do."* Alas for their unlimited and interminable misery! All the objects which the most insane intention fixes its desires upon shall be successfully carried out, and shall obey its will, so that nothing whatever shall fail, either small or great, but everything shall, as it were, make haste to meet and to anticipate their requirements.

XXXII. These things are an exhibition of a soul destitute of prudence, and which meets with no impediment to its indulging in sin; for whoever is not utterly incurable would rather pray that all the purposes of his mind might fail, so that if he had formed a resolution to steal, or to commit adultery, or to murder a man, or to commit sacrilege, or to perpetrate any similar crime, he might not succeed, but might find innumerable obstacles. For such hindrance would get rid of the greatest of all diseases, injustice; but any one who is free from all fear is sure to admit this malady.

Why then, my friends, do you any longer praise or admire the fortunes of tyrants, owing to which they succeed with ease in everything which they undertake, and which a frenzied and unrestrained mind prompts them to do? And yet one ought rather to lament over them, since inability and powerlessness to succeed in their objects is advantageous to the wicked, just as abundant opportunity and power is the most beneficial thing for the good. But one of the crowd of foolish men, perceiving to what an abundant superfluity of misery indulgence in sinning leads, said, speaking with perfect freedom, "My wickedness is too great for me to be forgiven."†

* Genesis xi. 6. † Genesis iv. 13.

It is, therefore, very melancholy indeed for the soul, which is by its own nature unmanageable, to be left without any restraint; while it is scarcely possible for any one to hold it in with reins, and by that means, in conjunction with the infliction of stripes, to reduce it to reason. On which account an oracle of the all-merciful God has been given, full of gentleness, which shadows forth good hopes to those who love instruction, in these terms: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* For when the chains of the soul, by which it has been used to be held in bondage, are loosened, then the greatest of all calamities follows, namely, the being deserted by God, who has fastened chains which can never be broken round the universe, namely, his own powers, with which he binds everything, willing that it shall never more be released. Accordingly, he says, in another passage, that "all things which are bound with a chain are pure;"† since unbinding is the cause of the destruction of that which is impure.

Beware, then, lest when you see a man accomplishing without difficulty all the objects which he endeavours to effect, you admire him as a prosperous man; take care rather to pity him as a very unfortunate one, because he passes his whole life in a perfect destitution of virtue and a great abundance of vice.

XXXIII. And it is worth while to consider in no superficial manner what the meaning is of that expression which is put by Moses into the mouth of God: "Come, let us go down and confuse their language there."‡ For here God is represented as if he were speaking to some beings who were his coadjutors. And the very same idea may be excited by what is said in the account of the creation of the world, for there, too, Moses records that "the Lord God said, Come, let us now make man in our image; man in our similitude."§ The expression, "Let us make," implying a number of creators. And, in another place, we are told that God said, "Behold, the man, Adam, has become as one of us, in respect of his knowing good and evil;"‖ for the expression, "as one of us," is not applicable to one person, but to many.

In the first place then, we must say this, that there is no existing being equal in honour to God, but there is one only

* Joshua i. 5. † Numbers xix. 15. ‡ Genesis xi. 7.
§ Genesis i. 26. ‖ Genesis iii. 22.

ruler and governor and king, to whom alone it is granted to govern and to arrange the universe. For the verse—

> A multitude of kings is never good,
> Let there one sovereign, one sole monarch be,*

is not more justly said with respect to cities and men than with respect to the world and to God; for it is clear from the necessity of things that there must be one creator, and one father, and one master of the one universe.

XXXIV. This point then being thus granted, it is necessary to convert with it also what follows, so as to adapt it properly. Let us then consider what this is: God, being one, has about him an unspeakable number of powers, all of which are defenders and preservers of every thing that is created; and among these powers those also which are conversant with punishment are involved. But even punishment is not a disadvantageous thing, inasmuch as it is both a hindrance to and a correction of doing wrong.

Again, it is by means of these powers that the incorporeal world, perceptible by the intellect, has been put together, which is the archetypal model of this invisible world, being compounded of invisible species, just as this world is of invisible bodies. Some persons therefore, admiring exceedingly the nature of both these worlds, have not only deified them in their wholes, but have also deified the most beautiful parts of them, such as the sun and the moon, and the entire heaven, which, having no reverence for anything, they have called gods. But Moses, perceiving their design, says, "O Lord, Lord, King of the gods,"† in order to show the difference between the ruler and those subject to him, "And there is also in the air a most sacred company of incorporeal souls as an attendant upon the heavenly souls; for the word of prophecy is accustomed to call these souls angels.

It happens therefore that the whole army of each of these worlds, being marshalled in their suitable ranks, are servants and ministers of the ruler who has marshalled them, whom they follow as their leader, in obedience to the principles of law and justice; for it is impossible to suppose that the divine army can even be detected in desertion. But it is suitable to the character of the king to associate with his own powers, and to avail himself of them, with a view to their ministrations

* Iliad ii. 204. † Deuteronomy x. 17.

in such matters as it is not fitting should be settled by God alone, for the Father of the universe has no need of anything, so as to require assistance from any other quarter if he wishes to make any thing.

But seeing at once what is becoming, both for himself and for his works of creation, there are some things which he has entrusted to his subordinate powers to fashion; and yet he has not at once given even to them completely independent knowledge to enable it to accomplish their objects, in order that no one of those things which come to be created may be found to be erroneously made.

XXXV. These things, then, it was necessary to give an idea of beforehand; but for what reason this was necessary we must now say. The nature of animals was originally divided into the portion endowed with and into that devoid of reason, the two being at variance with one another. Again the rational division was subdivided into the perishable and imperishable species, the perishable species being the race of mankind, and the imperishable species being the company of incorporeal souls which revolve about the air and heaven.

But these have no participation in wickedness, having received from the very beginning an inheritance without stain and full of happiness; and not being bound up in the region of interminable calamities, that is to say, in the body. The divisions also of the irrational part are free from any participation in wickedness, inasmuch as, having no endowment of intellect, they are never convicted of those deliberate acts of wickedness which proceed upon consideration.

But man is almost the only one of all living things which, having a thorough knowledge of good and evil, often chooses that which is worst, and rejects those things which are worthy of earnest pursuit, so that he is often most justly condemned as being guilty of deliberate and studied crime.

Very appropriately therefore has God attributed the creation of this being, man, to his lieutenants, saying, "Let *us* make man," in order that the successes of the intellect may be attributed to him alone, but the errors of the being thus created, to his subordinate power: for it did not appear to be suitable to the dignity of God, the ruler of the universe, to make the road to wickedness in a rational soul by his own agency; for which reason he has committed to those about him the creation of this

portion of the universe; for it was necessary that the voluntary principle, as the counterpoise to the involuntary principle, should be established and made known, with a view to the completion and perfection of the universe.

XXXVI. And this may be enough to say in this manner, and it is right that this point also should be considered, namely that God is the cause only of what is good but is absolutely the cause of no evil whatever, since he himself is the most ancient of all existing things, and the most perfect of all goods; and it is most natural and becoming that he should do what is most akin to his own nature, that is to say, that the best of all beings should be the cause of all the best things, but that the punishments appointed for the wicked are inflicted by the means of his subordinate ministers. And there is an evidence in favour of this assertion of mine in this expression, which was uttered by the man who was made perfect by practice; "The God who nourished me from my youth up, the angel who defended me from all evils;"* for by these words he already confesses that those genuine good things which nourish the souls which love virtue, are referred to God as their sole cause; but the fate of the wicked is, on the other hand, referred to the angels, and even they have not independent and absolute power of inflicting punishment, that this salutary nature may not afford an opportunity to any one of the things which tend to destruction.

For this reason God says, "Come, let us go down and confuse;" for the wicked, deserving to meet with such punishment as this, that the merciful, and beneficent, and bounteous, powers of God should become known to them chiefly by its inflictions. Knowing therefore that these powers are beneficial to the race of man, he has appointed the punishments to be inflicted by other beings; for it was expedient that he himself should be looked upon as the cause of well-doing, but in such a way that the fountains of his everlasting graces should be kept unmingled with any evils, not merely with those that are really evils, but even with those which are accounted such.

XXXVII. We must now examine what this confusion is. How then shall we enter on this examination? In this manner, in my opinion. We have very often known those whom we had knowledge of before, from certain similarities and a comparison

* Genesis xlviii. 16.

of circumstances which have some connection with them. Therefore we also become acquainted with things in the same manner, which it is not easy to form a conception of from their own nature, from some similarity of other things connected with them. What things then resemble confusion? Mixture, as the ancient report has it, and combination; but mixture takes place in dry things, and conbination is looked upon as belonging to wet substances. Mixture then is a placing side by side of different bodies in no regular order, as if any one were to make a heap, bringing barley, and wheat, and pease, and all sorts of other seeds, all into one mass; but conbination is not a placing side by side, but rather a mutual penetration of dissimilar parts entering into one another at all points, so that the distinctive qualities are still able to be distinguished by some artificial skill, as they say is the case with respect to wine and water; for these substances coming together form a combination, but that which is combined is not the less capable of being resolved again into the distinctive qualities from which it was originally formed.

For with a sponge saturated with oil it is possible for the water to be taken up and for the wine to be left behind, which may perhaps be because the origin of sponge is derived from water, and therefore it is natural that water being a kindred substance is calculated by nature to be taken up by the sponge out of the combination, but that that substance which is of a different nature, namely the wine, is naturally left behind.

But confusion is the destruction of all the original distinctive qualities, owing to their component parts penetrating one another at every point, so as to generate one thing wholly different, as is the case in that composition of the physicians which they call the tetrapharmacon. For that, I imagine, is made up of wax, and fat, and pitch, and resin, all compounded together, but when the medicine has once been compounded, then it is impossible for it again to be resolved into the powers of which it was originally composed, but every one of them is destroyed separately, and the destruction of them all has produced one other power of exceeding excellence. But when God threatens impious reasonings with confusion, he is in fact not only com manding the whole species and power of each separate wickedness to be destroyed, but also that thing which has been made up of all their joint contributions; so that neither the parts by

themselves, nor the union and harmony of the whole, can contribute any strength hereafter towards the destruction of the better part; on which account, he says, "Let us then confuse their language, so that each of them may not understand the voice of his neighbour;" which is equivalent to, let us make each separate one of the parts of wickedness deaf and dumb, so that it shall neither utter a voice of its own, nor be able to sound in unison with any other part, so as to be a cause of mischief.

XXXVII. This, now, is our opinion upon and interpretation of this passage. But they who follow only what is plain and easy, think that what is here intended to be recorded, is the origin of the languages of the Greeks and barbarians, whom, without blaming them (for, perhaps, they also put a correct interpretation on the transaction), I would exhort not to be content with stopping at this point, but to proceed onward to look at the passage in a figurative way, considering that the mere words of the scriptures are, as it were, but shadows of bodies, and that the meanings which are apparent to investigation beneath them, are the real things to be pondered upon. Accordingly, this lawgiver usually gives a handle for this doctrine to those who are not utterly blind in their intellect; as in fact he does in his account of this very event, which we are now discussing: for he has called what took place, confusion; and yet, if he had only intended to speak of the origin of languages, he would have given a more felicitous name, and one of better omen, calling it division instead of confusion: for things that are divided, are not confused, but, on the contrary, are distinguished from one another, and not only is the one name contrary to the other, but the one fact is contrary to the other fact.

For confusion, as I have already said, is the destruction of simple powers for the production of one concrete power; but division is the dissection of one thing into many parts, as is the case when one distinguishes a genus into its subordinate species: so that, if the wise God had ordered his ministers to divide language, which was previously only one, into the divisions of several dialects, he would have used more appropriate expressions, which should have given a more accurate idea of the case: calling what he did, dissection, or distribution, or division, or something of that kind, but not confusion a name which is at variance with all of them.

But his especial object here is to dissolve the company of wickedness, to put an end to their confederacy, to destroy their community of action, to put out of sight and extirpate all their powers, to overthrow the might of their dominion, which they had strengthened by fearful lawlessness. Do you not see that he also who made the parts of the soul did not unite any one part to another in such a way as to enable one to discharge the duties of the other? But the eyes would never be able to hear, nor the ears to see, nor the lips of the mouth to smell, nor the nostrils to taste; nor, again, could reason ever be exposed to those influences which operate upon the outward senses, nor again, would the outward senses be able to develop reason. For the Creator knew that it was desirable that each of these parts should not hear the voice of its neighbour, but that the parts of the soul should each exert its own peculiar faculties without confusion, for the advantage of living animals, and should, with the same object, be deprived of any power of exerting themselves in common, and that all the powers of vice should be brought to confusion and utter destruction, so that they might neither in confederacy, nor separately, be injurious to the better parts.

On which account Moses tells us, "The Lord scattered them from thence;" which is equivalent to, he dispersed them, he put them to flight, he banished them, he destroyed them; for to scatter is sometimes done with a view to the production, and growth, and increase of other things; but there is another kind which has for its object overthrow and destruction: but God, the planter of the world, wishes to sow in every one excellence, but to scatter and drive from the world accursed impiety; that the disposition which hates virtue may at last desist from building up a city of wickedness, and a tower of impiety; for when these are put to the rout, then those who have long ago been banished by the tyranny of folly, now, at one proclamation, find themselves able to return to their own country, God having drawn up and confirmed the proclamation, as the scriptures show, in which it is expressly stated that, "Even though thy dispersion be from one end of heaven to the other end of heaven, he will bring thee together from thence."*

So that it is proper that the harmony of the virtues should be arranged and cherished by God, and that he should dissolve

* Deuteronomy xxx. 4.

and destroy wickedness; and confusion is a name most appropriate to wickedness, of which every foolish man is a visible proof, having all his words, and intentions, and actions, incapable of standing an examination and destitute of steadiness.

A TREATISE

ON

THE MIGRATION OF ABRAHAM.

I. And the Lord said to Abraham, "Depart from thy land, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, to a land which I will show thee; and I will make thee into a great nation. And I will bless thee, and I will magnify thy name, and thou shalt be blessed. And I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse them that curse thee; and in thy name shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."*

God, wishing to purify the soul of man, first of all gives it an impulse towards complete salvation, namely, a change of abode, so as to quit the three regions of the body, the outward sense and speech according to utterance; for his country is the emblem of the body, and his kindred are the symbol of the outward sense, and his father's house of speech. Why so? Because the body derives its composition from the earth, and is again dissolved into earth; and Moses is a witness of this when he says, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."† For he says, that man was compounded by God fashioning a lump of clay into the form of a man; and it follows of necessity that, a composite being, when dissolved, must be dissolved into its component parts. But the outward sense is nearly connected with and akin to the mind, the irrational part to the rational, since they are both parts of one soul: but speech is the abode of the father, because our father is the mind, which implants in each of its parts its own powers, and distributes its energies among them, undertaking the care and superintendence of them all; and the abode in which it dwells is speech, a dwelling separated from all the rest of the house; for as the hearth is the abode of a man, so is speech of the mind: at all

* Genesis xii. 1. † Genesis iii. 19.

events, it displays itself, and all the notions which it conceives, arranging them and setting them in order in speech, as if in a house.

And you must not wonder that Moses has called speech in man the abode of the mind, for he also says, that the mind of the universe, that is to say, God, has for his abode his own word. And the practiser of virtue, Jacob, seizing on this apprehension, confesses in express words that, "This is no other than the house of God,"* an expression equivalent to, The house of God is not this thing, or anything which can be made the subject of ocular demonstration, or, in short, anything which comes under the province of the outward senses, but is invisible, destitute of all specific form, only to be comprehended by the soul as soul. What, then, can it be except the Word, which is more ancient than all the things which were the objects of creation, and by means of which it is that the Ruler of the universe, taking hold of it as a rudder, governs all things. And when he was fashioning the world, he used this as his instrument for the blameless arrangement of all the things which he was completing.

II. That he means by Abraham's country the body, and by his kindred the outward senses, and by his father's house uttered speech, we have now shown. But the command, "Depart from them," is not like or equivalent to, Be separated from them according to your essence, since that would be the injunction of one who was pronouncing sentence of death. But it is the same as saying, Be alienated from them in your mind, allowing none of them to cling to you, standing above them all; they are your subjects, use them not as your rulers; since you are a king, learn to govern and not to be governed: know yourself all your life, as Moses teaches us in many passages where he says, "Take heed to thyself."† For thus you will perceive what you ought to be obedient to, and what you ought to be the master of. Depart therefore from the earthly parts which envelop you, O my friend, fleeing from that base and polluted prison house the body, and from the keepers as it were of the prison, its pleasures and appetites, putting forth all your strength and all your power so as to suffer none of thy good things to come to harm, but improving all your good faculties together and unitedly. Depart also from thy

* Genesis xxviii. 17. † Exodus xxxiv. 12.

kindred, outward senses; for now indeed you have given yourself up to each of them to be made use of as it will, and you have become a good, the property of others who have borrowed you, having lost your own power over yourself. But you know that, even though all men are silent on the subject, your eyes lead you, and so do your ears, and all the rest of the multitude of that kindred connection, towards those objects which are pleasing to themselves. But if you choose to collect again those portions of yourself which you have lent away, and to invest yourself with the possession of yourself, without separating off or alienating any part of it, you will have a happy life, enjoying for ever and ever the fruit of good things which belong not to strangers but to yourself.

But now rise up also and quit speech according to utterance, which Moses here represents God as calling your father's house, that you may not be deceived by the specious beauty of words and names, and so be separated from that real beauty which exists in the things themselves which are intended by these names. For it is absurd for a shadow to be looked upon as of more importance than the bodies themselves, or for an imitation to carry off the palm from the model. Now the interpretation resembles a shadow and an imitation, but the natures of things signified under these expressions, thus interpreted, resemble the bodies and original models which the man who aims at being such and such rather than at appearing so must cling to, removing to a distance from the other things.

III. When therefore the mind begins to become acquainted with itself, and to dwell among the speculations which come under the province of the intellect, all the inclinations of the soul for the species which is comprehensible by the intellect will be repelled, which inclination is called by the Hebrews, Lot; for which reason the wise man is represented as distinctly saying, "Depart, and separate yourself from me;"* for it is impossible for a man who is overwhelmed with the love of incorporeal and imperishable objects to dwell with one, whose every inclination is towards the mortal objects of the outward senses.

Very beautifully therefore has the sacred interpreter of God's will entitled one entire holy volume of the giving of the

* Genesis xiii. 9.

law, the Exodus, having thus found out an appropriate name for the oracles contained therein. For being a man desirous of giving instruction and exceedingly ready to admonish and correct, he desires to remove the whole of the people of the soul as a multitude capable of receiving admonition and correction from the country of Egypt, that is to say, the body, and to take them out from among its inhabitants, thinking it a most terrible and grievous burden that the mind which is endowed with the faculty of sight should be oppressed by the pleasures of the flesh, and should obey whatever commands the relentless desires choose to impose upon it.

Therefore, after the merciful God has instructed this people, groaning and bitterly weeping for the abundance of the things concerning the body, and the exceeding supply of external things (for it is said, "The children of Israel groaned by reason of the works ")* when, God, I say, had instructed them about their going out, the prophet himself led them forth in safety.

But there are some persons who have made a treaty with the body to last till the day of their death, and who have buried themselves in it as in a chest or coffin or whatever else you like to call it, of whom all the parts which are devoted to the slavery of the body and of the passions are consigned to oblivion and buried. But if anything well-affected towards virtue has shot up by the side of it, that is preserved in the recollection, by means of which good things are naturally destined to be kept alive.

IV. Accordingly, the sacred scriptures command the bones of Joseph—I mean by this the only parts of such a soul as were left behind, being species which know no corruption and which deserve to have mention made of them—to be preserved, thinking it preposterous for pure things not to be united to pure things. And what is especially worthy of being mentioned is this, that he believed that God would visit the race which was capable of seeing,"† and would not give it up for ever and ever to ignorance, that blind mistress, but would distinguish between the immortal and the mortal parts of the soul, and leave in Egypt those parts which were conversant about the pleasures of the body and the other immoderate indulgences of the passions; but with respect to those parts which are im-

* Exodus ii. 23. † Genesis l. 24.

perishable, would make a covenant that they should be conducted onwards with those persons who were going up to the cities of virtue and would further ratify this covenant with an oath,

What then are the parts which are imperishable? In the first place, a perfect alienation from pleasure which says, "Let us lie down together,"* and let us enjoy human enjoyments; secondly, presence of mind combined with fortitude, by means of which the soul separates and distinguishes from one another those things which by vain opinions are accounted good things, as so many dreams, confessing that "the only true and accurate explanations of things are to be found with God;"† and that all those imaginings, which exist in the unsteady, puffed up, and arrogant life of those men who are not yet purified, but who delight in those pleasures which proceed from bakers, and cooks, and wine-bearers, are uncertain and indistinct; so that such a man is not a subject but a ruler of Egypt, that is to say of the whole region of the body; so that "he boasted of being of the race of the Hebrews,"‡ who were accustomed to rise up and leave the objects of the outward senses, and to go over to those of the intellect; for the name Hebrew, being interpreted, means "one who passes over," because he boasted that "here he had done nothing."§

For to do nothing of those things which are thought much of among the wicked, but to hate them all and reject them, is praiseworthy in no slight degree; as it is to despise immoderate indulgence of the desires and all other passions; to fear God, if a man is not yet capable of loving him, and even while in Egypt to have a desire for real life.

V. Which he who sees, marvelling at (and indeed it was enough ‖ to cause astonishment), says, "It is a great thing for me if my son Joseph is still alive,"¶ and has not died at the same time with vain opinions and the body which is but a lifeless carcass; and he also confessed that "it was the work of God,"** and not of any created being, that he was recognised by his brethren, and so could put into commotion and agitation, and put to the rout by force, all the dispositions devoted to the

* Genesis xxxix. 7.
† Genesis xl. 8.
‡ Genesis xl. 15.
§ Genesis xl. 17.
‖ Genesis xlii. 18.
¶ Genesis xlv. 28.
** Genesis l. 19.

body which flattered themselves that they could stand firmly on their own doctrines; he also said that "he had not been sent away by men, but had been appointed by God"* for the legitimate overseeing of the body and of all external things; but there are many other things also resembling these, being of a superior and more sacred kind of order; and they do not endure to abide in Egypt, the house of the body, and are never buried in a coffin at all, but depart to a distance outside of every thing mortal, and follow the words of the lawgiver, namely, Moses, who is the guide of their path.

For Moses, being the nurse as it were and tutor of good works, and good expressions, and good intentions, which, even if at times they are mingled with those of an opposite character by reason of the somewhat confused medely which exists in mortal man; are nevertheless distinguished when they have passed, so that all the seeds and plants of excellence may not be destroyed and perish for ever and ever. And he exhorts men very vigorously to quit that which is called the mother of every thing that is absurd, without any delay or sluggishness, but rather using exceeding swiftness; for he says that men "must sacrifice the *pascha*, in haste,"† and the word *pascha*, being interpreted, means a "passing over," in order that the mind, exerting its reasonings without any doubt, and also an energetic willingness and promptness, may, without ever turning back make a passing over from the passions, to gratitude to God the Saviour, who has led it forth beyond all its expectations to freedom.

VI. And why do we wonder if he exhorts the man who is led away by the force of unreasonable passions, neither to yield, nor to allow himself to be carried away by the impetuosity of its onward course, but to exert all his strength, to resist, and if he is unable to resist effectually, then to flee. For the second advance towards safety on the part of those who are unable to make a good resistance is flight. When the occasion does not permit the man who is a combatant by nature, and who has never been a slave of the passions, but who is always undergoing the toil of resistance to every separate one of them, to put forth all his powers of antagonism at all times, lest from the continuance of his struggles against them he may gradually contract a painful infection from them; for there

* Genesis xlv. 5. † Exodus xii. 12.

have before now been many instances of men having become imitators of the wickedness to which they were previously antagonists, as, on the other hand, some opposers of virtue have become copiers of that.

And for this reason the following scripture has been given to men, "Return to the land of thy father and to thy family, and I will be with thee;"* which is equivalent to saying, you have been a perfect wrestler for me, and you have been thought worthy of the prize and crown of victory, virtue having been the establisher of the contest and proposing to give prizes of victory; and now get rid of your fondness for contention, that you may not be always labouring but that you may be able to enjoy the fruit of your labours, which will never happen to you if you remain here dwelling among the objects of the external senses, and wasting your time among the distinctive qualities of the body, of which Laban is the leader (and this name means "distinctive quality;") but you must be an emigrant and must return to your native land, the land of the sacred word, and in some sense of the father of all those who practise virtue, which is wisdom, the best possible abiding place for those souls which love virtue.

In this country you have a race which learns everything of itself, and is self-taught, which has no share in the infantine food of milk, but which by the divine oracle "has been forbidden to go down to Egypt,"† and to put itself in the way of the attractive pleasures of the flesh, surnamed Isaac; and if you receive his inheritance, you will of necessity discard labour, for excessive abundance of things ready prepared, and of good things offered to your hand, will be the causes of cessation from toil. And the fountain from which good things are poured forth is the presence of the bounteous and beneficent God; on which account setting the seal to his loving kindnesses he says, "I will be with thee."

VII. How then should any good thing be wanting when the all-accomplishing God is at all times present with his graces, which are his virgin daughters, which he, the Father, who begot them, always cherishes as virgins, free from all impure contact and pollution? Then all cares, and labours, and exercises of practice, have a respite; and everything that is useful is at the same time given to everybody without the em-

* Genesis xxxi. 3. † Genesis xxvi. 2.

ployment of art, by the prescient care of nature; and the rapid influx of all these spontaneous blessings is called relaxation, since the mind is then relaxed and released from its energies as to its own peculiar objects, and is as it were emancipated from its yearly burdens,* by reason of the multitude of the things which are incessantly showered and rained upon it; and these things are in their own nature most admirable and most beautiful; for of the things of which the soul is in travail by herself, the greater part are premature and abortive progeny; but those on which God pours his showers and which he waters, are produced in a perfect, and entire, and most excellent state.

I am not ashamed to relate what has happened to me myself, which I know from having experienced it ten thousand times. Sometimes, when I have desired to come to my usual employment of writing on the doctrines of philosophy, though I have known accurately what it was proper to set down, I have found my mind barren and unproductive, and have been completely unsuccessful in my object, being indignant at my mind for the uncertainty and vanity of its then existing opinions, and filled with amazement at the power of the living God, by whom the womb of the soul is at times opened and at times closed up; and sometimes when I have come to my work empty I have suddenly become full, ideas being, in an invisible manner, showered upon me, and implanted in me from on high; so that, through the influence of divine inspiration, I have become greatly excited, and have known neither the place in which I was nor those who were present, nor myself, nor what I was saying, nor what I was writing; for then I have been conscious of a richness of interpretation, an enjoyment of light, a most penetrating sight, a most manifest energy in all that was to be done, having such an effect on my mind as the clearest ocular demonstration would have on the eyes.

VIII. That then which is shown is that thing so worthy of being beheld, so worthy of being contemplated, so worthy of being beloved, the perfect good, the nature of which is to change and sweeten the bitternesses of the soul, the most

* Here again Mangey supposes the text to be hopelessly corrupt. The word there is *ἐκουσίων*, for which he proposes and translates *φόρτων τῶν ἐτησίων*.

beautiful additional seasoning, full of all kinds of sweetnesses, by the addition of which, even those things which are not nutritious become salutary food; for it is said, that "the Lord showed him (Moses) a tree, and he cast it into the water,"* that is to say, into the mind, dissolved, and relaxed, and full of bitterness, that it might become sweetened and serviceable. But this tree promises not only food but likewise immortality; for Moses tells us, that the tree of life was planted in the midst of the paradise, being, in fact, goodness surrounded as by a body-guard by all the particular virtues, and by the actions in accordance with them; for it is virtue which has received the inheritance of the most central and excellent place in the soul.

And he who sees is the wise man; for the foolish are blind, or at best dim sighted. On this account I have before mentioned, that the then prophets were called seers;† and Jacob, the practiser of virtue, was desirous to give his ears in exchange for his eyes, if he could only see what he had previously heard described, and accordingly he receives an inheritance according to sight, having passed over that which was derived from hearing; for the coin of learning and instruction, which is synonymous with Jacob, is re-coined into the seeing Israel, in consequence of which he, the faculty of seeing, beholds the divine light, which is in no respect different from knowledge, which opens the eye of the soul, and leads it on to embrace the most conspicuous and manifest comprehension of existing things:‡ for as it is through music that the principles of music are understood, and through each separate art that its principles are comprehended, so also it is owing to wisdom that what is wise is contemplated: but not only is wisdom like light, the instrument of seeing, but it does also behold itself. This, in God, is the light which is the archetypal model of the sun, and the sun itself is only its image and copy; and he who shows each thing is the only all-knowing being, God; for men are called knowing only because they appear to know; but God, who really does know, is spoken of, as to his knowledge, in a manner inferior to its

* Exodus xv. 25. † 1 Samuel ix. 9.

‡ This again is Mangey's emendation. The Greek text has ὅτιον, which is either nonsense, or at least the opposite of what must be meant.

real nature, for everything that is ever spoken in his praise comes short of the real power of the living God.

And he recommends his wisdom, not merely by the fact that it was he who created the world, but also by that of his having established the knowledge of everything that has happened, or that has been created in the firmest manner close to himself; for it is said, that "God saw all the things that he had made,"* which is an expression equivalent not to, He directed his sight towards each thing, but to, He conceived a knowledge, and understanding, and comprehension, of all the things that he had made. It was very proper, therefore, to teach and to instruct, and to point out to the ignorant, each separate thing, but it was unnecessary to do so to the all-knowing God, who is not like a man, benefited by art, but who is himself confessed to be the beginning and source of all arts and sciences.

IX. And Moses speaks very cautiously, inasmuch as he defines not the present time but the future in the promise which he records, when he says, "Not that which I *do* show you, but that which I *will* show you;"† as a testimony to the faith with which the soul believed in God, showing its gratitude not by what had been already done, but by its expectation of the future; for, being kept in a state of suspense and eagerness by good hope, and thinking that even what was not present would beyond all question be present immediately, on account of its most certain faith in him who had promised, it found a reward, the perfect good; for in another passage it is said that Abraham believed in God.

And in the same way, God, when showing Moses all the land, says that, "I have shown it to thy eyes, but thou shalt not enter therein,"‡ Do not then fancy that this is spoken of the death of the all-wise Moses, as some inconsiderate persons believe; for it is a piece of folly to think that slaves should have the country of virtue assigned to them in preference to the friends of God. But first of all, God wishes to make it understood by you that there is one place for infants and another for full-grown men, the one being called practice and the other wisdom; and secondly, that the most beautiful of all the things in nature are rather such as can be seen than such as can be acquired; for how can it be possible

* Genesis i. 31. † Genesis xv. 5. ‡ Deut. xxxiv. 4.

to acquire possession of those things which are endowed in the same degree with the diviner attributes? But it is not impossible to see them, though it may not be given to all men to do so, for this may be permitted only to the purest and most acute-sighted race, to whom the father of the universe, when he displays his own works, is giving the greatest of all gifts.

For what life can be better than that which is devoted to speculation, or what can be more closely connected with rational existence; for which reason it is that though the voices of mortal beings are judged of by the faculty of hearing, nevertheless the scriptures present to us the words of God, to be actually visible to us like light; for in them it is said that, "All the people saw the voice of God;"* they do not say, "heard it," since what took place was not a beating of the air by means of the organs of the mouth and tongue, but a most exceedingly brilliant ray of virtue, not different in any respect from the source of reason, which also in another passage is spoken of in the following manner, "Ye have seen that I spake unto you from out of heaven,"† not "Ye have heard," for the same reason.

But there are passages where he distinguishes between what is heard and what is seen, and between the sense of seeing and that of hearing, as where he says, "Ye heard the sound of the words, but ye saw no similitude, only ye heard a voice;"‡ speaking here with excessive precision; for the discourse which was divided into nouns and verbs, and in short into all the different parts of speech, he has very appropriately spoken of as something to be heard; for in fact that is examined by the sense of hearing; but that which has nothing to do with either nouns or verbs, but is the voice of God, and seen by the eye of the soul, he very properly represents as visible; and having previously reminded them, "Ye saw no similitude," he proceeds to say, "Only ye heard a voice, which ye all saw;" for this must be what is understood as implied in those words. So that the words of God have for their tribunal and judge the sense of sight, which is situated in the soul: but those which are subdivided into nouns, and verbs, and other parts of speech, have for their judge the sense of hearing.

But as the writer being new in all kinds of knowledge, has

* Exodus xx. 18. † Exodus xx. 22. ‡ Deut. iv. 12.

also introduced this novelty both in his accounts of domestic and of foreign matters, saying that the voice is a thing to be judged of by the sight, which in point of fact is almost the only thing in us which is not an object of sight, with the single exception of the mind; for the things which are the objects of the rest of the outward senses are, every one of them, visible to the sight, such as colours, tastes, smells, things that are hot or cold, things that are smooth or rough, things that are soft or hard, inasmuch as they are substantial bodies. And what is meant by this I will explain more distinctly: a flavour is appreciable by the sight, not inasmuch as it is flavour, but so far as it is a mere substance, for in so far as it is flavour the sense of taste will judge of it; again a smell, in so far as it is a smell, will be decided upon by the nostrils, but inasmuch as it is a bodily substance, it will also be judged of by the eyes: and the other objects of sense will be tested in this manner; but voice is not appreciable by the sense of sight, neither inasmuch as it is a body, if indeed it is a body at all, nor inasmuch as it can be heard; but there are these two things in us which are wholly invisible—mind and speech; but the sound that proceeds from us does not the least resemble the divine organ of voice; for one organ of voice is mingled with the air, and flies to a kindred region with itself, namely to the ears; but the divine organ consists of unmixed and unalloyed speech, which outstrips the sense of hearing by reason of its fineness, and which is discerned by a pure soul, by means of its acuteness in the faculty of sight.

X. Therefore, after having left all mortal things, God, as I have said before, gives, as his first gift to the soul, an exhibition and an opportunity of contemplating mortal things: and in the second place he gives it an improvement in the doctrines of virtue, in respect both of their numbers and of their importance; for he says, "And I will make thee into a mighty nation," using this expression with reference to the multitude of the nation, and with reference to the increase and improvement of what was already great; and that this quantity in each kind, that is to say, both as to magnitude and as to number, was greatly increased, is pointed out by the king of Egypt, where he says, "For behold," says he, "the race of the children of Israel is a great multitude."*

* Exodus i. 9.

Since both these facts bear witness to the race which had the power of beholding the living God, that it had derived increase both in number and in magnitude, and as having done so, had met with prosperity, both in its life and in its language; for he does not say here (as any one would say who paid attention to the connection of the words which he was using), a numerous multitude, but he says, "A great multitude," knowing that the word numerous by itself implies an imperfect multitude, unless in addition to its numbers it has the attributes of intelligence and knowledge; for what advantage is it to comprehend many subjects of speculation, unless each of them receives a power of growth to a suitable size; for in like manner a field is not perfect in which there are innumerable plants growing on the ground, and no plant has grown up by means of the skill of the husbandman so as to arrive at perfection, unless it is now able to produce fruit.

But the beginning and the end of the greatness and numerousness of good things is the ceaseless and uninterrupted recollection of God, and an invocation of his assistance in the civil and domestic, confused and continual, warfare of life; for Moses says, "Behold, the people is wise and full of knowledge; this is a mighty nation; for what nation is there so great, that has God so near, as the Lord our God is to us in all the circumstances in which we call upon him?"* Therefore it has been plainly shown that there is power with God, which is a suitable and useful helper and defender, and the ruler himself comes nearer to the assistance of those persons who are worthy to be assisted.

XI. But who are they who are worthy to obtain such a mercy as this? It is plain that they are all lovers of wisdom and knowledge; for these are the wise people and the people of knowledge of whom he speaks, each of whom may naturally be called great, since he aims at great things, and at one great thing with excessive earnestness and eagerness, namely, at never being separated from the Almighty God, but at being able to endure his approach when he comes near steadily, and without any amazement or display.

This is the definition of great, to be near to God, or at least to be near to that thing to which God is near; forsooth the world and the wise citizen of the world are both full of many

* Deuteronomy iv. 6.

and great good things, but all the rest of the multitude of men is involved in numerous evils, and in but few good things; for the good is rare in the agitated and confused life of man. On which account it is said in the sacred scriptures, "It is not because you are numerous beyond all the nations that the Lord has selected you above them all, and has chosen you out; for in truth you are but few in comparison of all nations, but it is because the Lord loves you;"* for if any one were to choose to distribute the multitude of one soul as if according to nations, he would find a great many ranks totally destitute of all order, of which pleasures, or appetites or griefs, or fears, or again follies and iniquities, and all the other vices which are connected with or akin to them, are the leaders, and he would find but one rank alone well regulated, that namely which is under the leadership of right reason,

Among men, then, the unjust multitude is usually honoured more than one single just person; but in the eye of God a small company that is good is preferred to an infinite number of persons who are unjust. And, on that account, he warns men never to consent to a multitude of such a character; "For," says he, "thou shalt not join with a multitude to do evil." † May one, then, join a few to do so? One may never join a single bad man. But a bad man, though he be but a single individual, is a multitude in wickedness, and it is the greatest possible evil to join with him; for, on the contrary, it is becoming rather to oppose him and to make war upon him with fearless energy. "For if," says Moses, "you go forth to war against your enemies and see a horse," the emblem of arrogant and restive passion which scorns all control, "and a rider," the symbol of the mind devoted to the service of the passions, riding upon it, "and a great body of your people," admirers of those before-mentioned passions, and following in a solid phalanx, "you shall not be terrified so as to flee from them," for you, though only a single person, shall have a single being for your ally, "because the Lord your God is on your side;"‡ for his advance to battle puts an end to war, builds up peace again, overthrows numbers of long-accustomed evils, preserves the scanty race which loves God, to whom every one who becomes subject hates and abominates the ranks of the more earthly armies.

* Deut. vii. 7. † Exodus xxiii. 2. ‡ Deut. xx. 1

XII. "For," says Moses, "you shall not eat those animals which have a multitude of feet, being numbered among all the reptiles that are upon the earth; because they are an abomination."* But the soul is not deserving of being hated which goes upon the earth in one part of itself, but only that which does so with all or with the greatest proportion of its parts, and which is exceedingly greedy about the things of the body, and which, in short, is unable to penetrate into and contemplate the divine revolutions of the heaven. And, moreover, as the animal with many feet is accursed among reptiles, so also is that which has no feet at all; the one for the cause already mentioned, and the other because it entirely falls upon the ground in all its parts, not being supported off the ground by anything, not even for the briefest minute.

For Moses says that, "Everything which goes upon its belly is unclean;"† meaning, under this figurative expression, to point out those who pursue the pleasures of the belly. But some going far beyond these persons in wickedness, not only indulge in every description of desire, but also acquire that passion which is akin to desire, namely, anger, wishing to excite the whole of the irrational part of the soul and to destroy the mind. For what has been said in words, indeed, is applicable to the serpent, but in reality it is meant to apply to every man who is irrational and a slave to his passions, being truly a divine oracle, "Upon thy breast and upon thy belly shalt thou go;"‡ for anger has its abode about the breast, and the seat of desire is in the belly. But the foolish man proceeds always by means of the two passions together, both anger and desire, omitting no opportunity, and discarding reason as his pilot and judge.

But the man who is contrary to him has extirpated anger and desire from his nature, and has enlisted himself under divine reason as his guide; as also Moses, that faithful servant of God, did. Who, when he is offering the burnt offerings of the soul, "washes out the belly;"§ that is to say, he washes out the whole seat of desires, and he takes away "the breast of the ram of the consecration;"‖ that is to say, the whole of the warlike disposition, that so the remainder, the better portion of the soul, the rational part, having no longer anything to draw

* Leviticus xi. 42. † Leviticus xi. 43. ‡ Genesis iii. 14.
§ Exodus xxix. 26. ‖ Leviticus viii. 29.

it in a different direction or to counteract its natural impulses, may indulge its own free and noble inclinations towards everything that is beautiful; for, in this way, it will improve both in quantity and in magnitude. For it is said, "How long shall this people exasperate me? and till what time will they refuse to believe me in all the signs which I have done among them? I will smite them with death and I will destroy them, and I will make thee and thy father's house into a mighty nation, greater and mightier than this."*

For when the great multitude of the passions which indulge in anger and desire in the soul is put to the rout, then immediately those affections which depend on its rational nature rise up and become brilliant; for as the reptile with many feet and that with no feet at all, though they are exactly opposite to one another in the race of reptiles, are both pronounced unclean, so also the opinion which denies any God, and that which worships a multitude of Gods, though quite opposite in the soul, are both profane. And a proof of this is that the law banishes them both "from the sacred assembly,"† forbidding the atheistical opinion, as a eunuch and mutilated person, to come into the assembly; and the polytheistic, inasmuch as it prohibits any one born of a harlot from either hearing or speaking in the assembly. For he who worships no God at all is barren, and he who worships a multitude is the son of a harlot, who is in a state of blindness as to his true father, and who on this account is figuratively spoken of as having many fathers, instead of one.

XIII. There have now been two gifts of God already mentioned: the hope of a life devoted to contemplation, and an improvement in good things in respect both of quantity and of magnitude. The third gift is blessing, without which it is not possible that the graces already mentioned can be confirmed; for the scripture says, "And I will bless thee;" that is to say, I will give thee a word which shall be praised; for the portion εὖ (in εὐλογήσω, I will bless), is always applicable to virtue. And of speech, one kind is like a spring and another kind is like a stream; that which is in the mind being like the spring, and the utterance through the medium of the mouth and tongue resembling a stream. And it is great riches for either species of speech to be improved, for the mind to be so by exerting

* Numbers xiv. 11. † Deuteronomy xxiii. 2.

soundness of reason in everything, whether important or unimportant, or for the utterance to be so when under the guidance of right instruction; for many men think, indeed, most excellently, but are betrayed by a bad interpreter, namely, speech, because they have not throughly worked up the whole course of encyclical instruction. Others, again, have been exceedingly skilful in explaining their ideas, but very bad hands at forming intentions, as, for instance, those who are called sophists, for the mind of these sophists is destitute of all harmony and of all real learning; but their speeches, which are uttered by the organs of their voice, are full of music and beauty.

But God gives no imperfect gifts to his subjects, but all his presents are complete and perfect. On which account he now dispenses blessing not to one section only, that of speech, but to both portions; thinking it proper that the man who has received a benefit should also conceive the most excellent notions, and should also be able to explain what he has conceived in a powerful manner; for perfection, as it seems, consists in the two points, of being able to form clear and just conceptions and intentions, and also of being able to interpret them correctly. Do you not see that Abel (and the name Abel is the name of one who mourns over mortal things, and attributes happiness to immortal things), has a mind wholly free from all liability to reproach? And yet, from not being practised in discussions, he is defeated by one who is clever as an antagonist in such things, Cain being able to get the better of him more through superiority of skill than of strength; for which reason, though I admire him on account of the good fortune with which he was endowed by nature, I nevertheless blame the disposition in him that, when he was challenged to a contest of discussion, he came forward to contend, when he ought to have abided by his usual tranquillity, discarding all love for contention. But if he was determined by all means to enter into such a contest, then still he ought not to have engaged in it until he had sufficiently practised himself in the exercises of the art; for men who have been long versed in political strife are usually accustomed to get the better of men of uncultivated acuteness.

XIV. For this reason also the all-accomplished Moses deprecates coming to a consideration of reasonable looking and plausible arguments, from the time that God began to cause the light of truth to shine upon him; through the

immortal words of his knowledge and wisdom. But he is not the less led on to the contemplation of these arguments, not for the sake of becoming skilful in many things (for the contemplation of God himself and of his most sacred powers, are quite sufficient for a man who is fond of contemplation), but with a view to get the better of the sophists in Egypt, where fabulous and plausible inventions are looked upon as entitled to higher honour than a clear statement of truth.

When, therefore, the mind walks abroad among the affairs of the ruler of the universe, it requires nothing further as an object of contemplation, since the mind alone is the most piercing of all eyes as applied to the objects of the intellect; but when it is directed towards those things which are properly objects of the outward senses, or to any passion, or substance, of which the land of Egypt is the emblem, then it will have need of skill and power in argument. On which account Moses is directed also to take Aaron with him as an addition, Aaron being the symbol of uttered speech, "Behold," says God, "is not Aaron thy brother?"* For one rational nature being the mother of them both, it follows of course that the offspring are brothers, "I know that he will speak." For it is the office of the mind to comprehend, and of utterance to speak. "He," says God, "will speak for thee." For the mind not being able to give an adequate exposition of the part which is assigned to it, uses its neighbour speech as an interpreter, for the purpose of explaining what it feels.

Presently he further adds, "Behold he will come to meet thee," since in truth speech when it meets the conceptions, and embodies them in words, and names stamps what had before no impression on it, so as to make it current coin. And further on he says, "And when he seeth thee he will rejoice in himself;" for speech rejoices and exults when the conception is not indistinct, because it being clear and evident employs speech as an unerring and fluent expositor of itself, having a full supply of appropriate and felicitous expressions full of abundant distinctness and intelligibility.

XV. At all events when the conceptions are at all indistinct and ambiguous, speech is the treading as it were on empty air, and often stumbles and meets with a severe fall, so as never to be able to rise again. "And thou shalt speak to

* Exodus iv. 14.

him, and thou shalt give my words into his mouth," which is equivalent to, Thou shalt suggest to him conceptions which are in no respect different from divine language and divine arguments. For without some one to offer suggestions, speech will not speak; and the mind is what suggests to speech, as God suggests to the mind. "And he shall speak for thee to the people, and he shall be thy mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God." And there is a most emphatic meaning in the expression, "He shall speak for thee," that is to say, He shall interpret thy conceptions, and "He shall be thy mouth." For the stream of speech being borne through the tongue and mouth conveys the conceptions abroad. But speech is the interpreter of the mind to men, while again mind is by means of speech the interpreter to God; but these thoughts are those of which God alone is the overseer.

Therefore it is necessary for any one who is about to enter into a contest of sophistry, to pay attention to all his words with such vigorous earnestness, that he may not only be able to escape from the manœuvres of his adversaries, but may also in his turn attack them, and get the better of them, both in skill and in power. Do you not see that conjurors and enchanters, who attempting to contend against the divine word with their sophistries, and who daring to endeavour to do other things of a similar kind, labour not so much to display their own knowledge, as to tear to pieces and turn into ridicule what was done?* For they even transform their rods into the nature of serpents, and change water into the complexion of blood, and by their incantations they attract the remainder of the frogs to the land, and, like miserable men as they are, they increase everything for their own destruction, and while thinking to deceive others they are deceived themselves. And how was it possible for Moses to encounter such men as these unless he had prepared speech, the interpreter of his mind, namely Aaron? who now indeed is called his mouth; but in a subsequent passage we shall find that he is called a prophet, when also the mind, being under the influence of divine inspiration, is called God.

"For," says God, "I give thee as a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet."† O the harmonious and well-organised consequence! For that which interprets

* Exodus vii. 12. † Exodus vii. 1.

the will of God is the prophetical race, being under the influence of divine possession and frenzy. Therefore "the rod of Aaron swallowed up their rods,"* as the holy scripture tells us. For all sophistical reasons are swallowed up and destroyed by the varied skilfulness of nature; so that they are forced to confess that what is done is "the finger of God,"† an expression equivalent to confessing the truth of the divine scripture which asserts that sophistry is always subdued by wisdom. For the sacred account tells us that "the tables" on which the commandments were engraved as on a pillar, "were also written by the finger of God."‡ On which account the conjurors were not able to stand before Moses, but fell down as in a wrestling match, being overcome by the superior strength of their antagonist.

XVI. What then is the fourth gift? The having a great name, for God says, "I will magnify thy name;"§ and the meaning of this, as it appears to me, is as follows; as to be good is honourable, so also to appear to be so is advantageous. And truth is better than appearance, but perfect happiness is when the two are combined. For there are great numbers of people who apply themselves to virtue in genuine honesty and sincerity, and who admire its genuine beauty, having no regard to the reputation which they may have with the multitude, and who in consequence have been plotted against, being thought wicked though in reality they are good. And indeed there is no advantage whatever in seeming, unless being has also been added long before, as is the case with respect to bodies; for if all men were to fancy that one who was labouring under a disease was in good health, or that one in good health was labouring under a disease, still their opinion would not of itself create either disease or good health. But the man to whom God has given both things, namely both to be good and virtuous and also to appear so, that man is truly happy, and has a name which is really magnified. And one must have a prudent regard for a good reputation as a thing of great importance, and one which greatly benefits the life which is dependent on the body. And it falls to the lot of every one who, rejoicing with contentment, changes none of the

* Exodus vii. 12. † Exodus viii. 19.
‡ Exodus xxxii. 16. § Genesis xii. 2.

existing laws, but zealously preserves the constitution of his native land.

For there are some men, who, looking upon written laws as symbols of things appreciable by the intellect, have studied some things with superfluous accuracy, and have treated others with neglectful indifference; whom I should blame for their levity; for they ought to attend to both classes of things, applying themselves both to an accurate investigation of invisible things, and also to an irreproachable observance of those laws which are notorious. But now men living solitarily by themselves as if they were in a desert, or else as if they were mere souls unconnected with the body, and as if they had no knowledge of any city, or village, or house, or in short of any company of men whatever, overlook what appears to the many to be true, and seek for plain naked truth by itself, whom the sacred scripture teaches not to neglect a good reputation, and not to break through any established customs which divine men of greater wisdom than any in our time have enacted or established. For although the seventh day is a lesson to teach us the power which exists in the uncreated God, and also that the creature is entitled to rest from his labours, it does not follow that on that account we may abrogate the laws which are established respecting it, so as to light a fire, or till land, or carry burdens, or bring accusations, or conduct suits at law, or demand a restoration of a deposit, or exact the repayment of a debt, or do any other of the things which are usually permitted at times which are not days of festival. Nor does it follow, because the feast is the symbol of the joy of the soul and of its gratitude towards God, that we are to repudiate the assemblies ordained at the periodical seasons of the year; nor because the rite of circumcision is an emblem of the excision of pleasures and of all the passions, and of the destruction of that impious opinion, according to which the mind has imagined itself to be by itself competent to produce offspring, does it follow that we are to annul the law which has been enacted about circumcision. Since we shall neglect the laws about the due observance of the ceremonies in the temple, and numbers of others too, if we exclude all figurative interpretation and attend only to those things which are expressly ordained in plain words.

But it is right to think that this class of things resembles

the body, and the other class the soul; therefore, just as we take care of the body because it is the abode of the soul, so also must we take care of the laws that are enacted in plain terms: for while they are regarded, those other things also will be more clearly understood, of which these laws are the symbols, and in the same way one will escape blame and accusation from men in general. Do you not see that Abraham also says, that both small and great blessings fell to the share of the wise man, and he calls the great things, "all that he had," and his possessions, which it is allowed to the legitimate son alone to receive as his inheritance; but the small things he calls gifts, of which the illegitimate children and those born of concubines, are also accounted worthy. The one, therefore, resemble those laws which are natural, and the other those which derive their origin from human enactment.

XVII. I also admire Leah, that woman endued with all virtue, who, at the birth of Asher, who is the symbol of that bastard wealth, which is perceptible by the outward senses, says, "Blessed am I, because all women shall call me happy."* For she sees plainly that she will have a favourable reputation, thinking that she deserves to be praised, not only by those reasonings which are really masculine and manly, which have a nature free from all spot and stain, and which honour that which is really honest and incorrupt, but also by those more feminine reasonings which are in every respect overcome by those things which are visible, and which are unable to comprehend any object of contemplation which is beyond them. But it is the part of a perfect soul to set up a claim, not only to be, but also to appear to be, and, to labour earnestly not merely to have a good reputation in the houses of the men, but also in the secret chambers of the women.

On which account Moses also committed the preparation of the sacred works of the tabernacle not only to men, but also to women, who were to aid in making them; for all "the woven works of hyacinthine colour, and of purple and of scarlet work, and of fine linen, and of goats' hair, do the women make;" and they also contribute their own ornaments without hesitation, "seals, and ear-rings, and finger-rings, and armlets, and tablets, all jewels of gold."†—everything, in short, of which gold was the material, gladly giving up the ornaments of their

* Genesis xxx. 13. † Exodus xxxv. 22.

person in exchange for piety; and, moreover, carrying their real to a still higher degree, they likewise consecrated even their mirrors, that a laver might be made of them,"* in order that those who were about to assist at the sacrifices, washing their hands and their feet, that is to say, those works about which the mind is occupied and on which it is fixed, may have a view of themselves in a mirror according to the recollection of those mirrors of which the laver was made; for in this way they will never permit anything disgraceful to remain in any portion of the soul. And now they will dedicate the offering of fasting and patience, the most beautiful and sacred, and perfect of offerings.

But these real citizens and virtuous women are really as it were the outward senses, by whom Leah, that is virtue, desires to be honoured. But they who kindle an additional fire against the miserable mind are destitute of any city. For we read in the scripture that even, "women still burnt additional fire to Moab."† But may we not in this way say that so each of the outward senses of the foolish man when set on fire by the appropriate objects of outward sense, does also set fire to the mind, spreading over it an exceeding and interminable flame with irresistible vigour and impetuosity. At all events it is best to propitiate the array of women, that is to say, of the outward senses in the soul, just as it is desirable to do so with respect to the men, that is to say, with respect to the particular reasonings. For in this manner we shall arrange a more excellent system of life in a very beautiful manner.

XVIII. On this account also the self-instructed Isaac prays to the lover of wisdom, that he may be able to comprehend both those good things which are perceptible by the outward senses, and those which are appreciable only by the intellect. For he says, "May God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth,"‡ a prayer equivalent, to May he in the first place pour upon thee a continual and heavenly rain appreciable by the intellect, not violently so as to wash thee away, but mildly and gently like dew, so as to benefit thee. And in the second place, may he bestow upon thee that earthly wealth which is perceptible by the outward senses, fat and fertile, having drained off its opposite, namely poverty, from the soul and from all its parts.

* Exodus xxxviii. 8. † Numbers xxi. 30. ‡ Genesis xxvii. 28.

esent. But the extreme portions, those namely at t
ad and at the feet, we will examine.

There is then on the head "a golden leaf,"* pure, havi
it the impression of a seal, "Holiness to the Lord
nd on the feet there are, "on the fringe of the inner garmen
lls and small flowerets."† But this seal is an idea of idea
cording to which God fashioned the world, being an inco
real idea, comprehensible only by the intellect. And th
werets and the bells are symbols of distinctive qualiti
ceptible by the outward senses; of which the facu
s of hearing and of seeing are the judges. And l
ds, with exceeding accuracy of investigation, "The voice
n shall be heard as he enters into the holy place," in orde
it when the soul enters into the places appreciable by theinte
t, and divine, and truly holy, the very outward senses ma
ewise be benefited, and may sound in unison, in accordanc
h virtue; and our whole system, like a melodious chorus c
ny men, may sing in concert one well-harmonised melod
nposed of different sounds well combined, the thoughts in
ring the leading notes (for the objects of intellect are th
ders of the chorus); and the objects of the external senses
ging in melodies, accord the symphonies which follow, whic
compared to individual members of the chorus.

For, in short, as the law says, it was not right for the sou
be deprived of "its necessaries, and its garments, and it

before mentioned, in order that the objects of the outward senses may appear as the invisible objects of the intellect do also.

XIX. There is, also, a fifth gift, which consists only in the bare fact of existence; and it is mentioned after all the previous ones, not because it is inferior to them, but rather because it overtops and excels them all; for what can be a greater blessing than to be formed by nature, and to be, without any falsehood or fictitious pretence, really good and worthy of the most perfect praise? "For," says God, "thou shalt be blessed"* (εὐλογητὸς); not merely a person who is blessed (εὐλογημένος), for this latter fact is estimated by the opinions and report of the multitude, but the other depends on a person being, in real truth, deserving of blessings; for as the being praiseworthy (τὸ ἐπαινετὸν εἶναι) differs from being praised, being superior to it; and as the being blameworthy differs from being blamed, in being worse; for the one depends upon a person's natural character, while the other is affirmed only with reference to his being considered such and such. And real genuine nature is a more reliable thing than opinion; so, also, to be blessed by men, that is to say, to be celebrated by their praises and benedictions, is of less value than to be formed by nature so as to be worthy of blessing, even though all men should be silent respecting one, and this last is what is meant in the scriptures by the term blessed (εὐλογητὸς).

XX. These are the good things which are given to him who is about to be wise. But let us now examine what God, for the sake of the wise man, bestows on the rest of mankind also. He says, "I will bless those who bless thee, and curse those who curse thee."† Now that this is said by way of doing honour to the good man, is plain to every one. And this, too, is not the only reason why it is said, but it is said also on account of the harmonious consequence which exists in things; for he who praises a good man is himself worthy of encomium, and he who blames him is, on the other hand, deserving of blame. But it is not so much the power of those who utter or who write praise or blame that is trusted to, as the real character of what is due; so that those persons would not really appear to praise or to blame at all who, in either case, adopt or introduce any falsehood of their own. Do you not see flatterers who,

* Genesis xii. 2. † Genesis xii. 3.

day and night, weary and annoy the ears of those to whom they address their flatteries, and who not only nod assent to every word that they say, but who also string together long sentences, and connect rhapsodies, and often pray to them with their mouths, but who are continually cursing them in their hearts? What, then, would any one in his senses say? Would he not pronounce that those who speak thus are, in reality, enemies rather than friends, and do in reality blame them rather than praise them, even if they put together whole dramas full of panegyric and sing them in their honour?

Therefore, the vain Balaam, although he sang hymns of exceeding sublimity to God, among which, also, is that one beginning, "God is not as a man,"* the most beautiful of all songs, and who uttered panegyrics on the seeing multitude, Israel, going through a countless body of particulars, is rightly judged by the wise lawgiver to have been an impious man and accursed, and to have been cursing rather than blessing; for he says that he was hired for money by the enemy, and so became an evil prophet of evil things, bearing in his soul most bitter curses against the God loving nature, but being compelled to utter prophetically with his mouth and tongue the most exquisite and sublime prayers in their favour; for the things that he said, being very excellent, were, in fact, suggested by the God who loves virtue; but the curses which he conceived in his mind (for they were wicked) were the offspring of his mind, which hated virtue.

And the sacred scripture bears testimony to this fact; for it says, "God did not grant to Balaam leave to curse thee, but turned his curses into blessing;"† though, in fact, all the words that he uttered were full of good omen. But he who looks into all that is laid up in the recesses of the heart, and who alone has the power to see those things which are invisible to created beings, from these secret things has passed a condemnatory decree, being in his own person at once the most indubitable of witnesses and the most incorruptible of judges, since even the contrary thing is praised, namely, for a man who appears to calumniate and to accuse with his mouth, in his heart to be blessing, and praising, and speaking words of good omen. This, as it would seem, is the custom of those who correct youth, and of preceptors, and of parents, and of

* Numbers xxiii. 19. † Deuteronomy xxiii. 5.

elders, and of rulers, and of laws; for they, at times, do each of them reprove and punish, and by these means render the souls of those who are under their instruction better. And of these men no one is an enemy to his pupil, but they are all of them friendly to all of them; but it is the office of friends who have a genuine and unalloyed good will to others to speak freely, without any unfriendly purpose.

Therefore, as far as blessings, and praises, and prayers, or, on the other hand, reproaches and curses are concerned, one must not so much be guided by what proceeds out of the mouth by utterance, as by what is in the heart, by which, as by the original source of them all, both kinds of speeches are estimated.

XXI. These, then, are the things which, he says, happen in the first instance to others on account of the good man, when they seek to load him with either praise or blame, or with blessings or curses. But that which comes next in order is the most important thing; that when they are silent, still no portion of the rational nature is left without a participation in the benefits; for God says that, "In thee shall all the nations of the world be blessed." And this is a promise exceedingly full of doctrine; for if the mind is always free from disease and from injury, it then exerts all the tribes of feelings which affect it, and all its powers in a state of sound health, namely, its powers of seeing and of hearing, and all those which belong to the outward senses; and, moreover, all its appetites which are conversant about pleasures and desires, and all those feelings likewise which being reduced from a state of agitation to one of tranquillity, receive a better character from the change.

Before now, indeed, cities, and countries, and peoples, and nations of the earth, have enjoyed the greatest happiness and prosperity in consequence of the virtue and prudence of the individual; especially so when, in addition to a good disposition and wisdom, God has also given him irresistible power, as he may have given to a musician or to any artist the proper instruments for music, or for carrying out any other art, or as wood is supplied as a material for fire; for in good truth the just man is the prop of all the human race; and he, bringing all that he has into the common stock for the advantage of these who can use it, bestows his treasures ungrudgingly, and what

ever he finds that he has not got in himself, he prays for to the only giver of all wealth, the all-bounteous God.

And God, opening the treasures of heaven, pours forth and showers down upon him all kinds of good things together; so that all the channels on earth are filled with them to overflowing. And these blessings he at all times freely bestows, never rejecting the prayer of supplication which is addressed to him; for it is said in another passage, when Moses addresses him with supplication: "I am favourable to them according to thy word."* And this expression, as it seems, is equivalent to the other: "In thee all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." On which account also the wise Abraham, who had had experience of the goodness of God in all things, believes that even if all other things are destroyed, still a small fragment of virtue would be preserved, like a spark of fire, and that for the sake of this little spark, he pities those other things also, so as to raise them up when fallen, and re-kindle them when extinct.

For even the slightest spark of fire that is still smouldering, when it is fanned and re-kindled will set fire to a large pile: and so too the smallest spark of virtue, when it beams up, being wakened into life by good hopes, gives light to what has previously been dim-sighted and blind, and causes what has been withered to shoot up again, and whatever is barren and unproductive it transforms and brings to abundance of prolific power. Thus a good, which is but rare, is, by the kindness of God, made abundant and showered upon men, making everything else to resemble itself.

XXII. Let us therefore pray that the mind may be in the soul like a pillar in a house, and, in like manner, that the just man may be firmly established in the human race for the relief of all diseases; for while he is in vigorous health, one must not abandon all hope of complete safety, as through the medium of him, I imagine God the Saviour extending his all-healing medicine, that is to say, his propitious and merciful power to his suppliants and worshippers, bids them employ it for the salvation of those who are sick; spreading it like a salve over the wounds of the soul, which folly, and injustice, and all the other multitude of vices, being sharpened up, have

* Numbers xiv. 20.

grievously inflicted upon it. And a most visible example of this is the righteous Noah, who, when so many portions of the soul were swallowed up in the great deluge, himself vigorously overtopped the waves and floated on their surface, and so rose above all the dangers which threatened him; and when he had escaped in safety, he sent out great and beautiful roots from himself, from which, like a tree, the whole crop of wisdom sprang up, which, bearing useful fruit, put forth the three fruits of the seeing creature, Israel, the measures of time, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

For, virtue is, and will be, and has been in everything; which virtue perhaps is at times obscured among men by the want of opportunity, but which opportunity the minister of God again brings to light. Since Sarah, that is to say, prudence, brings forth a male child, flourishing, not according to the periodical seasons of the year, but according to those seasons and felicitous occasions which have no connection with time; for it is said, "I will surely return and visit thee according to the time of life; and Sarah, thy wife, shall have a son."*

XXIII. We have now, then, said enough about the gifts which God is accustomed to bestow on those who are to become perfect, and through the medium of them on others also.

In the next passage it is said, that "Abraham went as the Lord commanded him."† And this is the end which is celebrated among those who study philosophy in the best manner, namely, to live in accordance with nature. And this takes place when the mind, entering into the path of virtue, treads in the steps of right reason, and follows God, remembering his commandments, and at all times and in all places confirming them both by word and deed;" for "he went as the Lord commanded him." And the meaning of this is, as God commands (and he commands in a beautiful and praiseworthy manner), in that very manner does the virtuous man act, guiding the path of his life in a blameless way, so that the actions of the wise man are in no respect different from the divine commands. At all events, God is represented in another passage as saying, "Abraham has kept all my law."‡ And law is nothing else but the word of God, enjoining what

* Genesis xviii. 10. † Genesis xii. 4. ‡ Genesis xxvi. 5.

is right, and forbidding what is not right, as he bears witness, where he says, "He received the law from his words."*

If, then, the divine word is the law, and if the righteous man does the law, then by all means he also performs the the word of God. So that, as I said before, the words of God are the actions of the wise man. Accordingly, the end is according to the most holy Moses, to follow God; as he says also in another passage, "Thou shalt walk after the Lord thy God;"† not meaning that he should employ the motion of his legs; for the earth is the support of a man, but whether the whole world is sufficient to be the support of God, I do not know; but he seems here to be speaking allegorically, intending to represent the way in which the soul follows the divine doctrines, which has a direct reference to the honour due to the great cause of all things.

XXIV. And he also, with a wish further to excite an irresistible desire of what is good, enjoins one to cleave to it; for he says, "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve; and thou shalt cleave to him."‡ What, then, is this cleaving? What? Surely it is piety and faith; for these virtues adapt and invite the mind to incorruptible nature. For Abraham also, when he believed, is said to have "come near to God."§ If, therefore, while you are walking you are neither fatigued, so as to give way and stumble, nor are so careless as to turn to either the right hand or to the left hand, and so to stray and miss the direct road which lies between the two; but if, imitating good runners, you finish the course of life without stumbling or error, you will deservedly obtain the crown and worthy prize of victory when you have arrived at your desired end.

For is not this the crown and the prize of victory not to miss the proposed end of one's labours, but to arrive at that goal of prudence which is so difficult to be reached? What, then, is the object of having right wisdom? To be able to condemn one's own folly and that of every created being. For to be aware that one knows nothing is the end of all knowledge, since there is only one wise being, who is also the only God. On which account Moses very beautifully has represented the father of the universe as being also the inspector and superin

* Deut. xxxiii. 4.
† Deut. xiii. 4.
‡ Deut. x. 20.
§ Genesis xviii. 23.

tendent of all that he has created, saying, "God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good."* For it was not possible for any one to have an accurate view of all that had been created, except for the Creator.

Come, then, ye who are full of arrogance, and ignorance, and of exceeding insolence, ye that are wise in your own conceit, and who say not only that ye know accurately what each thing is, but that you are also able to explain the causes why it is so, showing daring with great rashness, as if ye had either been present at the creation of the world, and had actually seen how and from what each separate thing was made, or had been counsellors of the Creator concerning the things which were created. Come, and at once abandoning all other things, learn to know yourselves, and tell us plainly what ye yourselves are in respect of your bodies, in respect of your souls, in respect of your external senses, and in respect of your reason.

Tell us now with respect to one, and that the smallest, perhaps, of the senses, what sight is, and how it is that you see; tell us what hearing is, and how is it that you hear; tell us what taste is, what touch is, what smell is, and how it is that you exercise the energies of each of these faculties; and what the sources of them are from which they originate. For do not tell me long stories about the moon and the sun, and all the other things in heaven and in the world, which are at such a distance from us and which are so different in their natures, empty-minded creatures that you are, before you examine into and become acquainted with yourselves; for when you have learnt to understand yourselves, then perhaps one may believe you when you enter into explanations respecting other things. But till you are able to tell what you yourselves are, do not expect ever to be looked upon as truth-telling judges or witnesses with respect to others.

XXV. Since, then, these things are in this state, the mind, when it is rendered perfect, will pay its proper tribute to the God who causes perfection, according to that most sacred scripture, "For the law is, that tribute belongs to the Lord."† When does the mind pay it? When? "On the third day it comes to the place which God has told it of,"‡ having passed by the greater portions of the differences of time, and being now passing over to that nature which has no connection with

* Genesis i. 31. † Numbers xxxi. 40. ‡ Genesis xxii. 4.

time; for then it will sacrifice its beloved son, not a man (for the wise man is not a slayer of his children), but the male offspring of a virtuously living soul, the fruit which germinates from it, as to which it knows not how it bore it, the divine shoot, which, when it appears, the soul then having appeared to be pregnant, confesses that it does not understand the good which has happened to it, saying, "Who will tell to Abraham?"* as if, in fact, he would refuse to believe about the rising up of the self-taught race, that "Sarah was suckling a child," not that the child was being suckled by Sarah. For the self-taught offspring is nourished by no one, but is itself the nourishment of others as being competent to teach, and having no need to learn; for "I have brought forth a son," not like the Egyptian women, in the flower of my age and in the height of my bodily vigour, but like the Hebrew souls, "in my old age,"† when all the objects of the outward senses and all mortal things are faded, and when the objects of the intellect and immortal things are in their full vigour and worthy of all estimation and honour.

And I have brought forth, too, without requiring the aid of the midwife's skill; for we bring forth even before any skill or knowledge of man can come to us, without any of the ordinary means of assistance to help us, God having sown and generated an excellent offspring, which, in accordance with the law made concerning gratitude, very properly requites its creator with gratitude and honour. For, says God, "My gifts, and my offerings, and my first fruits, you have taken care to bring to me."‡

XXVI. This is the end of the path of those who follow the arguments and injunctions contained in the law, and who walk in the way which God leads them in; but he who falls short of this, on account of his hunger after pleasure and his greediness for the indulgence of his passions, by name Amalek; § for the interpretation of the name Amalek is, "the people that licks up" shall be cut off. And the sacred scriptures teach us that this disposition is an insidious one; for when it perceives that the most vigorous portion of the power of the soul has passed over, then, "rising up from its ambuscade, it cuts to pieces the fatigued portion like a rearguard."

* Genesis xxi. 7. † Exodus i. 18.
‡ Numbers xxviii. 2. § Deuteronomy xxv. 17.

And of fatigue there is one kind which easily succumbs through the weakness of its reason which is unable to support the labours, which are to be encountered in the cause of virtue, and so, like those who are surprised in the rearguard, it is easily overcome. But the other kind is willing to endure honourable toil, vigorously persevering in all good things, and not choosing to bear anything whatever that is bad, not even though it be ever so trifling, but rejecting it as though it were the heaviest of burdens.

On which account, the law has also, by a very felicitous appellation, called virtue Leah, which name, being interpreted, means "wearied;" for she very naturally thought the life of the wicked heavy and burdensome, and in its own nature wearisome; and did not choose even to look upon it, turning her eyes only on what is beautiful; and let the mind labour not only to follow God without any relaxation or want of vigour, but also to walk onwards by the straight path, turning to neither side, neither to the right nor yet to the left, as the earthly Edom did, seeking out of the way lurking places, at one time being full of excesses and superfluities, and at another of differences and short comings; for it is better to proceed along the middle road, which is that which is really the royal road, and which the great and only King, God, has widened to be a most suitable abode for the souls that love virtue. On which account some also of those who prosecute a gentle kind of philosophy, which is conversant chiefly about the society of mankind, have pronounced the virtues to be means, placing them on the confines between two extremes. Since, on the one hand, excessive pride, being full of much insolence is an evil, and to take up with a humble and self-abasing demeanour is to expose one's self to be trampled upon; but the mean, which is compounded of both, in a gentle manner is advantageous.

XXVII. We must also inquire what the meaning of the expression, "He went with Lot," * is. Now, the name Lot, being interpreted, means "declination;" and the mind declines or inclines, at one time rejecting what is good, and at another time what is evil. And both these declinations are often seen in one and the same thing. For there are some hesitating and wavering people who incline to both sides in turn, like a

* Genesis xii. 4.

ship which is tossed about by different winds, or like the different sides of a scale, being unable to rest firmly on one thing; people whom one cannot praise even when they turn to the better side, for they are influenced by impulse, and not by deliberate meaning. Now, of these men Lot is a spectator, who Moses here says went with the lover of wisdom. But it was very well that when he began to accompany him he should unlearn ignorance, and should never again return to it. But still he goes with him, not in the hope of deriving improvement from an imitation of a better man, but with a view of persecuting him also with a counter attraction and allurements in an opposite direction, and of leading him where there was a chance of his falling.

And a proof of this is, that the one, having fallen back again into his ancient disease, departs, having been taken prisoner by those enemies who are in the soul; but the other, having guarded against all his designs, concealed in ambuscade, took every imaginable care to live at a distance from him. But the separate habitation he will arrange hereafter, but not yet. For at present, his speculations, as would be likely to be the case with a man who has but lately begun to apply himself to divine contemplation, have a want of solidity and steadiness in them. But when they have become more compact, and are established on a firmer footing, then he will be able to separate from himself the alluring and flattering disposition as an irreconcileable enemy, and one difficult to subdue: for this is that disposition which attaches itself to the soul in such a manner as to be difficult to shake off, hindering it from proceeding swiftly on its progress towards virtue.

This, too, when we leave Egypt, that is to say, the whole of the district connected with the body, being anxious to unlearn our subjection to the passions, in accordance with the language and precepts of the prophet Moses, follows us close, checking and impeding our zeal in the departure, and out of envy causing delay to the rapidity of setting forth; for it is said, "And a great mixed multitude went up with them, and sheep, and oxen, and very much cattle."* But this mixed multitude, if one is to speak the plain truth, are the cattle-like and irrational doctrines of the soul.

XXVIII. And it is with particular beauty and propriety that

* Exodus xii. 38.

he calls the soul of the wicked man a mixed multitude: for it is truly a company which has been collected and brought together from all quarters, and composed of a promiscuous body of numerous and antagonist opinions, being, though only one in point of number, of infinite variety by reason of its versatility and diversity; on which account, besides the word "mixed," there is also added the epithet "great:" for he who looks at one end only is truly simple, and unmixed, and plain; but he who proposes to himself many objects of life is manifold, and mixed, and rough, in real truth: on which account the sacred scriptures say, that that practiser of virtue, Jacob, was a smooth man, and that Esau, the practiser of what is shameful, was a hairy or rough man.

On account, then, of this mixed and rough multitude collected together from mixed opinions collected from all imaginable quarters, the mind which was able to exert great speed when it was fleeing from the country of the body, that is, from Egypt, and which was able in those days to receive the inheritance of virtue, being assisted by a threefold light, the memory of past things, the energy of present things, and the hope of the future, passed that exceeding length of time, forty years, in going up and down, and all around, wandering in every direction by reason of the diversity of manners, when it ought rather to have proceeded by the straight and most advantageous way.

This is he who not only rejoiced in a few species of desire, but who also chose to pass by none whatever entirely, so that he might obtain the whole entire genus in which every species is included; for it is said that, "the mixed multitude that was among them desired all kinds of concupiscence,"* that is to say, the very genus of concupiscence itself, and not some one species; and sitting down they wept. For the mind is conscious that it is possessed of but slight power, and when it is not able to obtain what it desires, it weeps and groans; and yet it ought to rejoice when it fails to be able to indulge its passions, or to become infected with diseases, and it ought to think their want and absence a very great piece of good fortune. But it very often happens to the followers of virtue, also, to become languid and to weep, either because they are bewailing the calamities of the foolish, on account of their participation in their common

* Numbers xi. 4.

nature, and their natural love for their race, or through excess of joy.

And this excess of joy arises whenever on a sudden an abundance of all kinds of good coming together are showered down to overflowing, without having been previously expected; in reference to which kind of joy it is that the poet appears to me to have used the expression—

Smiling amid her tears.*

For exceeding joy, the best of all feelings, falling on the soul when completely unexpected, makes it greater than it was before, so that the body can no longer contain it by reason of its bulk and magnitude; and so, being closely packed and pressed down, it distils drops which it is the fashion to call tears, concerning which it is said in the Psalms, "Thou shalt give me to eat bread steeped in tears;"† and again, "My tears have been my bread day and night;"‡ for the food of the mind are tears such as are visible, proceeding from laughter seated internally and excited by virtuous causes, when the divine desire instilled into our hearts changes the song which was merely the lament of the creature into the hymn of the uncreated God.

XXIX. Some persons then repudiate this mixed and rough multitude, and raise a wall of fortification to keep it from them, rejoicing only in the race which loves God; but some, on the other hand, form associations with it, thinking it desirable to arrange their own lives according to such a system that they can place them on the confines between human and divine virtues, in order that they may touch both those which are virtues in truth and those which are such in appearance.

Now the disposition which concerns itself in the affairs of state adheres to this opinion, which disposition it is usual to call Joseph, with whom, when he is about to bring his father, there go up "all the servants of Pharaoh, and the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the whole family of Joseph, himself, and his brothers, and all his father's house."§ You see here that this disposition which is conversant about affairs of state is placed between the house of Pharaoh and his father's house, in order that it might equally reach the affairs of the body, that is to say, of Egypt;

* Homer's Iliad, vi. 484.
† Psalm lxxx. 5.
‡ Psalm xlii. 3.
§ Genesis l. 7.

and those of the soul, which are all laid up in his father's house as in a treasury; for when he says, "I am of God,"* and all the other things which are akin to or connected with him abide among the established laws of his father's house; and when he mounts up into the second chariot of the mind, which appears to bear sovereign sway, namely Pharaoh, he is again establishing Egyptian pride. And he is more miserable who is looked upon as a king of considerable renown, and who is borne along in the chariot which has the precedence; for to be pre-eminent in what is not honourable is the most conspicuous disgrace, just as it is a lighter evil to come off second best in such a contest.

But you may learn to perceive how wavering a disposition such a man has from the oaths which he swears, swearing at one time "by the health of Pharaoh,"† and then again, on the contrary, "not by the health of Pharaoh." But this latter formula of oath, which contains a negation, looks as if it were the injunction of his father's house, which is always meditating the destruction of the passions, and wishing that they should die; but the other brings us back to the discipline of Egypt, which desires that these passions should be preserved; on which account, although so great a multitude went up together, he still does not call it a mixed multitude, since to a person who is endowed with a real power of seeing, and who is a lover of virtue, every thing which is not virtue nor an action of virtue, appears to be mixed and confused; but to him who still loves the things of earth, the prizes of earth do by themselves seem to be worthy of love and worthy of honour.

XXX. Accordingly, as I have already said, the lovers of wisdom will raise a wall of exclusion against the man who, like a drone, has resolved to injure his profitable labours, and who follows him with this object, and he will receive those who, out of their admiration of what is honourable, follow him with a view to imitating him; assigning to each of them that portion which is suited to them; for, says he, "of the men who went with me, Eschol, Annan, and Mamre shall receive a share."‡ And by these names of persons he means dispositions which are good by nature and fond of contemplation; for Eschol is an emblem of a good disposition, having a name of fire, since a good disposition is full of good daring

* Genesis l. 19. † Genesis xlii. 16. ‡ Genesis xiv. 24.

and fervour, and adheres to what it has ever applied itself. And Annan is the symbol of a man fond of contemplation; for the name, being interpreted, means "the eyes," from the fact that the eyes of the soul also are opened by cheerfulness; and of both these persons a life of contemplation is the inheritance, which is entitled Mamre, which name is derived from seeing; and to the contemplative man, the faculty of seeing is most appropriate and most peculiarly belonging.

But when the mind, having been under the tuition of these trainers, finds nothing wanting for practice, it then proceeds onwards with and accompanies perfect wisdom, not outstripping it nor being outstripped by it, but marching alongside of it step by step, with equal pace. And the words of scripture show this, in which it is distinctly stated that "they both of them went together, and came to the plain which God had mentioned to them:" a most excellent equality of virtues, better than any rivalry, an equality of labour with a natural good condition of body, and an equality of art with self-instructed nature, so that both of them are able to carry off equal prizes of virtue; as if the arts of painting and statuary were not only able, as they are at present, to make representations devoid of motion or animation, but were able also to invest the objects which they paint or form with motion and life; for in that case the arts which were previously imitative of the works of nature would appear now to have become the natures them selves.

XXXI. But whoever is raised on high to such a sublime elevation will never any more allow any of the portions of his soul to dwell below among mortal men, but will draw them all up to himself as if they were suspended by a rope; for which reason a sacred injunction of the following purport was given to the wise man, "Go thou up to thy Lord, thou, and Aaron, and Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel."† And the meaning of this injunction is as follows, "Go up, O soul, to the view of the living God, in an orderly manner, rationally, voluntarily, fearlessly, lovingly, in the holy and perfect numbers of seven multiplied tenfold." For Aaron is described in the law as the prophet of Moses, being loudly uttered speech prophesying to the mind. And Nadab is interpreted "voluntary," that is to say, the man who honours the

* Genesis xxii. 3. † Exodus xxiv. 1.

Deity without compulsion; and the interpretation of the name Abihu is, "my father." This man is one who has not need of a master by reason of his folly, more than of a father by reason of his wisdom, namely such a father as God the ruler of the world. And these powers are the body-guards of the mind which is worthy to bear sovereign sway, which ought also to attend upon the king, and conduct him on his way.

But the soul is afraid by itself to rise up to the contemplation of the living God, if it does not know the road, from being lifted up by a union of ignorance and audacity; and the falls which are caused by such a union of ignorance and great rashness are very serious; on which account Moses prays that he may have God himself as his guide to the road which leads to him. For he says, "If thou wilt not thyself go with me, then do not thou lead me hence."* Because every motion which is without the divine approbation is mischievous, and it is better for men to remain here wandering about in this mortal life, as the greater portion of the human race does, than raising themselves up to heaven in pride and arrogance, to encounter an overthrow, as has happened to countless numbers of sophists, who have looked upon wisdom as only a discovery of plausible arguments, and not, as it is, a certain belief in and well-assured knowledge of facts. And perhaps too there is some such meaning as this intended to be conveyed by these words,—do not raise me up on high, bestowing on me riches, or glory, or honours, or authority, or any other of those things which are usually ranked as good, unless you intend also to go with them and me yourself; for these things are o ten calculated to cause either great mischief, or great advantage to their possessors; advantage when God is the guide of their mind; injury when the contrary is the case. For to great numbers of people the things which are called good not being so in reality have been the causes of irremediable evils, but the man who follows God does of necessity have for his fellow travellers all those reasons which are the attendants of God, which we are accustomed to call angels.

At all events, it is said that "Abraham went with them conducting them on their way."† Oh the admirable praise! according to which, he who was conducting others was himself conducted by them, only giving what he was receiving; not

* Exodus xxxiii. 15. † Genesis xviii. 16.

giving one thing instead of another, but only that one single thing, which was prepared as a retributory gift, for until a man is made perfect he uses divine reason as the guide of his path, for that is the sacred oracle of scripture: "Behold, I send my angel before thy face that he may keep thee in the road, so as to lead thee into the land which I have prepared for thee. Attend thou to him, and listen to him; do not disobey him; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him."* But when he has arrived at the height of perfect knowledge, then, running forward vigorously, he keeps up with the speed of him who was previously leading him in his way; for in this way they will both become attendants of God who is the guide of all things; no one of those who hold erroneous opinions accompanying them any longer, and even Lot himself, who turned on one side the soul, which might have been upright and inflexible, removing and living at a distance.

XXXII. And "Abraham," says Moses, "was seventy-five years of age, when he departed out of Charran." Now concerning the number of seventy-five years (for this contains a calculation corresponding to what has been previously advanced,) we will enter into an accurate examination hereafter. But first of all we will examine what Charran is, and what is meant by the departure from this country to go and live in another. Now it is not probable that any one of those persons who are acquainted with the law are ignorant that Abraham had previously migrated from Chaldæa when he came to live in Charran. But after his father died he then departed from this land of Chaldæa, so that he had now migrated from two different places. What then shall we say?

The Chaldeans appear beyond all other men to have devoted themselves to the study of astronomy and of genealogies; adapting things on earth to things sublime, and also adapting the things of heaven to those on earth, and like people who, availing themselves of the principles of music, exhibit a most perfect symphony as existing in the universe by the common union and sympathy of the parts for one another, which though separated as to place, are not disunited in regard of kindred. These men, then, imagined that this world which we behold was the only world in the existing universe, and was either God himself, or else that it contained within itself God, that

* Exodus xxiii. 20.

is, the soul of the universe. Then, having erected fate and necessity into gods, they filled human life with excessive impiety, teaching men that with the exception of those things which are apparent there is no other cause whatever of anything, but that it is the periodical revolutions of the sun, and moon, and other stars, which distribute good and evil to all existing beings.

Moses indeed appears to have in some degree subscribed to the doctrine of the common union and sympathy existing between the parts of the universe, as he has said that the world was one and created (for as it is a created thing and also one, it is reasonable to suppose that the same elementary essences are laid as the foundations of all the particular effects which arise, as happens with respect to united bodies that they reciprocally contain each other); but he differs from them widely in their opinion of God, not intimating that either the world itself, or the soul of the world, is the original God, nor that the stars or their motions are the primary causes of the events which happen among men; but he teaches that this universe is held together by invisible powers, which the Creator has spread from the extreme borders of the earth to heaven, making a beautiful provision to prevent what he has joined together from being dissolved; for the indissoluble chains which bind the universe are his powers.

On which account even though it may be said somewhere in the declaration of the law, "God is in the heaven above, and in the earth beneath," let no one suppose that God is here spoken of according to his essence. For the living God contains everything, and it is impiety to suppose that he is contained by any thing, but what is meant is, that his power according to which he made, and arranged, and established the universe, is both in heaven and earth. And this, to speak correctly, is goodness, which has driven away from itself envy, which hates virtue and detests what is good, and which generates those virtues by which it has brought all existing things into existence and exhibited them as they are.

Since the living God is indeed conceived of in opinion everywhere, but in real truth he is seen nowhere; so that divine scripture is most completely true in which it is said, "Here am I," speaking of him who cannot be shown as if he were being shown, of "him who is invisible as if he were

visible, before thou existedst." * For he proceeds onward before the created universe, and outside of it, and not contained or borne onward in any of the things whose existence began after his.

XXXIII. These things then having been now said for the purpose of overturning the opinions of the Chaldeans; he thinks that it is desirable to lead off and invite away those who are still Chaldaizing in their minds to the truth of his teaching, and he begins thus:—

"Why," says he, "my excellent friends do you raise yourselves up in such a sudden manner from the earth, and soar to such a height? and why do ye rise above the air, and tread the ethereal expanse, investigating accurately the motions of the sun, and the periodical revolutions of the moon, and the harmonious and much-renowned paths of the rest of the stars? for these things are too great for your comprehension, inasmuch as they have received a more blessed and divine position. Descend therefore from heaven, and when you have come down, do not, on the other hand, employ yourselves in the investigation of the earth and the sea, and the rivers, and the natures of plants and animals, but rather seek to become acquainted with yourselves and your own nature, and do not prefer to dwell anywhere else, rather than in yourselves. For by contemplating the things which are to be seen in your own dwelling, that which bears the mastery therein, and that which is in subjection; that which has life, and that which is inanimate; that which is endowed with and that which is destitute of reason; that which is immortal, and that which is mortal; that which is better, and that which is worse; you will at once arrive at a correct knowledge of God and of his works. For you will perceive that there is a mind in you and in the universe; and that your mind, having asserted its authority and power over all the things in you, has brought each of the parts into subjection to himself. In like manner also, the mind of the universe being invested with the supremacy, governs the world by independent law and justice, having a providential regard not only for those things which are of more importance, but also for those which appear to be somewhat obscure.

XXXIV. Abandoning therefore your superfluous anxiety to

* Exodus xvii. 6.

investigate the things of heaven, dwell, as I said just now within yourselves, forsaking the land of the Chaldeans, that is, opinion, and migrating to Charran the region of the outward sense, which is the corporeal abode of the mind. For the name Charran, being interpreted, means "a hole;" and holes are the emblems of the places of the outward sense. For in some sense they are all holes and caves, the eyes being the caves in which the sight dwells, the ears those of hearing, the nostrils those of smelling, the throat the cavern of taste, and the whole frame of the body, being the abode of touch. Do ye therefore, dwelling among these things, remain tranquil and quiet, and investigate with all the exactness in your power the nature of each, and when you have learnt what there is good and bad in each part, avoid the one and choose the other.

And when you have thoroughly and perfectly considered the whole of your own habitation, and have understood what relative importance each of its parts possesses, then rouse yourselves up and seek to accomplish a migration from hence, which shall announce to you, not death, but immortality; the evident proofs of which you will see even while involved in the corporeal cares perceptible by the outward senses, sometimes while in deep slumber (for then the mind, roaming abroad, and straying beyond the confines of the outward senses, and of all the other affections of the body, begins to associate with itself, looking on truth as at a mirror, and discarding all the imaginations which it had contracted from the outward senses, becomes inspired by the truest divination respecting the future, through the instrumentality of dreams), and at other times in your waking moments. For when, being under the influence of some philosophical speculations, you are allured onwards, then the mind follows this, and forgets all the other things which concern its corporeal abode; and if the external senses prevent it from arriving at an accurate sight of the objects of the intellect, then those who are fond of contemplation take care to diminish the impetuosity of its attack, for they close their eyes and stop up their ears, and check the rapid motion of the other organ, and choose to abide in tranquillity and darkness, that the eye of the soul, to which God has granted the power of understanding the objects of the intellect, may never be overshadowed by any of those objects appreciable only by the outward senses.

XXXV. Having then in this manner learnt to accomplish the abandonment of mortal things, you shall become instructed in the proper doctrines respecting the uncreated God, unless indeed you think that our mind, when it has put off the body, the external senses, and reason, can, when destitute of all these things and naked, perceive existing things, and that the mind of the universe, that is to say, God, does not dwell outside of all material nature, and that he contains everything and is not contained by anything; and further, he does not penetrate beyond things by his intellect alone, like a man, but also by his essential nature, as is natural for a God to do; for it is not our mind which made the body, but that is the work of something else, on which account it is contained in the body as in a vessel; but the mind of the universe created the universe, and the Creator is better than the created, therefore it can never be contained in what is inferior to itself; besides that it is not suitable for the father to be contained in the son, but rather for the son to derive increase from the love of the father.

And in this manner the mind, migrating for a short time, will come to the father of piety and holiness, removing at first to a distance from genealogical science, which originally did erroneously persuade it to fancy that the world was the primary god, and not the creature of the first God, and that the motions and agitations of the stars were the causes to men of disaster, or, on the contrary, of good fortune. After that the mind, coming to a due consideration of itself, and studying philosophically the things affecting its own abode, that is the things of the body, the things of the outward sense, the things of reason, and knowing, as the line in the poet has it—

> That in those halls both good and ill are planned;*

Then, opening the road for itself, and hoping by travelling along it to arrive at a notion of the father of the universe, so difficult to be understood by any guesses or conjectures, when it has come to understand itself accurately, it will very likely be able to comprehend the nature of God; no longer remaining in Charran, that is in the organs of outward sense, but returning to itself. For it is impossible, while it is still in a state of motion, in a manner appreciable by the outward sense rather

* Homer. Odyssey, iv. 392.

than by the intellect, to arrive at a proper consideration of the living God.

XXXVI. On which account also that disposition which is ranked in the highest class by God, by name Samuel, does not explain the just precepts of kingly power to Saul, while he is still lying among the pots, but only after he has drawn him out from thence: for he inquires whether the man is still coming hither, and the sacred oracle answers, "Behold, he is hidden among the stuff."* What, then, ought he who hears this answer, and who is by nature inclined to receive instruction, to do, but to draw him out at once from thence? Accordingly, we are told, "He ran up and took him out from thence, because he who was abiding among the vessels of the soul, that is, the body and the outward senses, was not worthy to hear the doctrines and laws of the kingdom (and by the kingdom, we mean wisdom, since we call the wise man a king); but when he has risen up and changed his place, then the mist around him is dissipated, and he will be able to see clearly.

Very appropriately, therefore, does the companion of knowledge think it right to leave the region of the outward sense, by name Charran; and he leaves it when he is seventy-five years old; and this number is on the confines of the nature discernible by the outward senses, and of that intelligible by the intellect, and of the older and younger, and also of perishable and imperishable nature; for the elder, the imperishable ratio, that comprehensible by the intellect, exists in the seventy; the younger ratio, discernible by the outward senses, is equal in number to the five outward senses. In this latter also the practiser of virtue is seen exercising himself when he has not yet been able to carry off the perfect prize of victory;—for, it is said, that all the souls which came out of Jacob were seventy and five;†—for to him, while wrestling, and not shrinking at all from the truly sacred contest, for the acquisition of virtue, belong the souls which are the offspring of the body, and which have not yet acquired reason, but are still attracted by the multitude of the outward senses.

For Jacob is the name of one who is wrestling and engaged in a contest and trying to trip up his antagonist, not of one who has gained the victory. But when he appeared to have gained ability to behold God, his name was changed to Israel, and

* 1 Samuel x. 22. † Genesis xlvi. 27.

then he uses only the computation of seventy, having extirpated the number five, the number of the outward senses; for it is said, that "thy fathers went down to Egypt, being seventy souls."* This is the number which is familiar to Moses the wise man: for it happened that those who were selected as carefully picked men out of the whole multitude, were seventy in number; and those all elders, not only in point of age, but also in wisdom and counsel, and in prudence, and in ancient integrity of manners. And this number is consecrated and dedicated to God when the perfect fruits of the soul are offered up.

For, on the feast of tabernacles, besides all other sacrifices, it is ordered that the priest should offer up seventy heifers for a burnt offering. Again, it is in accordance with the computation of seventy that the phials of the princes are provided, for each of them is of the weight of seventy shekels; since whatever things are associated and confederate together in the soul, and dear to one another, have a power which is truly attractive, namely, the sacred computation of seventy, which Egypt, the nature which hates virtue, and loves to indulge the passions, is introduced as lamenting; for mourning among them is computed at seventy days.†

XXXVII. This number, therefore, as I have said before, is familiar to Moses, but the number of the five outward senses is familiar to him who embraces the body and external things, which it is customary to call Joseph; for he pays such attention to those things, that he presents his own uterine brother,‡ the offspring of the outward sense, for he had no acquaintance at all with those who were only his brothers as sons of the same father, with five exceedingly beautiful garments, thinking the outward senses things of exceeding beauty, and worthy of being adorned and honoured by him. Moreover, he also enacts laws for the whole of Egypt, that they should honour them, and pay taxes and tribute to them every year as to their kings; for he commands them to take a fifth§ part of the corn, that is to say, to store up in the treasury abundant materials and nourishment for the five outward senses, in order that each of them might rejoice while filling itself unrestrainedly with suitable food, and that it might weigh down and overwhelm the mind with the

* Deuteronomy x. 22.
† Genesis l. 8.
‡ Genesis xlv. 22.
§ Genesis xlvii. 24.

multitude of things which were thus brought upon it; for during the banquet of the outer senses, the mind is labouring under a famine, as, on the contrary, when the outward senses are fasting, the mind is feasting.

Do you not see that the five daughters of Salpaad, which we, using allegorical expressions, call the outward senses, were born of the tribe of Manasseh, who is the son of Joseph, the elder son in point of time, but the younger in rank and power? and very naturally, for he is so called from forgetfulness, which is a thing of equal power with an outward sense. But recollection is placed in the second rank, after memory, of which Ephraim is the namesake; and the interpretation of the name of Ephraim is, "bearing fruit;" and the most beautiful and nutritious fruit in souls is a memory which never forgets; therefore the virgins speak to one another in a becoming manner, saying, "Our father is dead." Now the death of recollection is forgetfulness: "And he has died not for his own sin,"* speaking very righteously, for forgetfulness is not a voluntary affection, but is one of those things which are not actually in us, but which come upon us from without. And they were not his sons, but his daughters; since the power of memory, as being what has its existence by its own nature, is the parent of male children; but forgetfulness, arising from the slumber of reason, is the parent of female children, for it is destitute of reason; and the outward senses are the daughters of the irrational part of the soul.

But if any one has outrun him in speed, and has become a follower of Moses, though he is not yet able to keep pace with him, he will use a compound and mixed number, namely, that of five and seventy, which is the symbol of the nature which is both perceptible by the outward senses and intelligible by the intellect, the two uniting together for the production of one irreproachable species.

XXXVIII. I very much admire Rebecca, who is patience, because she, at that time, recommends the man who is perfect in his soul, and who has destroyed the roughnesses of the passions and vices, to flee and return to Charran; for she says, "Now, therefore, my child, hear my voice, and rise up and depart, and flee away to Laban, my brother, to Charran, and dwell with him certain days, until the anger and rage of thy

* Numbers xxvii. 3.

brother is turned from being against thee, and till he forgets what thou hast done to him."* And it is with great beauty that she here calls going by the road, which leads to the outward senses, a fleeing away; for, in truth, the mind is then a fugitive, when, having left its own appropriate objects which are comprehensible to the understanding, it turns to the opposite rank of those which are perceptible by the outward senses. And there are cases in which to run away is useful, when a person adopts this line of conduct, not out of hatred to his superior, but in order to avoid the snares which are laid for him by his inferior.

What, then, is the recommendation of patience? A most admirable and excellent one. If ever, she says, you see the passion of rage and anger highly provoked and excited to ferocity either in thyself or in any one else, which is nourished by irrational and unmanageable nature, do not excite it further and make it more savage, for then perhaps it will inflict incurable wounds; but cool its fervour, and pacify its too highly inflamed disposition, for if it be tamed and rendered tractable it will do you less injury.

What, then, are the means by which it can be tamed and pacified? Having, as far as appearance goes, assumed another form and another character, follow it, first of all, wherever it pleases, and, opposing it in nothing, admit that you have the same objects of love and hatred with itself, for by these means it will be rendered propitious; and, when it is pacified, then you may lay aside your pretence, and, not expecting any longer to suffer any evil at its hand, you may with indifference return to the care of your own objects; for it is on this account that Charran is represented as full of cattle, and as having tenders of flocks for its inhabitants. For what region could be more suitable for irrational nature, and for those who have undertaken the care and superintendence of it, than the external senses which exist in us? Accordingly, when the practiser of virtue asks, "From whence come ye?" the shepherds answer him truly, that they come "from Charran."† For the irrational powers come from the external sense, as the rational ones come from the mind. And when he further inquires whether they know Laban, they very naturally assert that they do know him, for the outward sense is acquainted with complexion and

* Genesis xxvii. 43. † Genesis xxix. 4.

with every distinctive quality, as it thinks; and of complexion and distinctive qualities Laban is the symbol.

And he himself, when at last he is made perfect, will quit the abode of the outward senses, and will set up the abode of the soul as belonging to the soul, which, while still among labours and among the external senses, he gives a vivid description of; for he says, "When shall I make myself, also, a house?"* When, disregarding the objects of the external senses and the external senses themselves, shall I dwell in mind and intellect, being, in name, going to and fro among and dwelling among the objects of contemplation, like those souls which are fond of investigating invisible objects, which it is usual to call midwives? For they also make suitable coverings and phylacteries for souls which are devoted to virtue; but the strongest and most defensible abode was the fear of God, to those, at least, who have him for an impregnable fortress and wall. "For," says Moses, "when the midwives feared God they made themselves houses."†

XXXIX. The mind, therefore, going forth out of the places which are in Charran, is said "to have travelled through the land until it came to the place of Sichem, to a lofty oak."‡ And let us now consider what this travelling through the land means. The disposition which is fond of learning is inquisitive and exceedingly curious by nature, going everywhere without fear or hesitation and prying into every place, and not choosing to leave anything in existence, whether person or thing, not thoroughly investigated; for it is by nature extraordinarily greedy of everything that can be seen or heard, so as not only not to be satisfied with the things of its own country, but even to desire foreign things which are established at a great distance. At all events, they say that it is an absurd thing for merchants and dealers to cross the seas for the sake of gain, and to travel all round the habitable world, not allowing any considerations of summer, or winter, or violent gales, or contrary winds, or old age, or bodily sickness, or the society of friends, or the unspeakable pleasures arising from wife, or children, or one's other relations, or love of one's country, or the enjoyment of political connections, or the safe fruition of one's money and other possessions, or, in fact, anything whatever, whether great or small, to be any hindrance to them; and

* Genesis xxx. 30. † Exodus i 21 ‡ Genesis xii. 6.

yet for men, for the sake of that most beautiful and desirable of all possessions, the only one which is peculiar to the human race, namely, wisdom, to be unwilling to cross over every sea and to penetrate every recess of the earth, inquiring whenever they can find anything beautiful either to see or to hear, and tracing out such things with all imaginable zeal and earnestness, until they arrive at the enjoyment of the things which are thus sought for and desired.

Do thou then, O my soul, travel through the land, and through man, bringing if you think fit, each individual man to a judgment of the things which concern him; as, for instance, what the body is, and under what influences, whether active or passive, it co-operates with the mind; what the external sense is, and in what manner that assists the dominant mind; what speech is, and of what it becomes the interpreter so as to contribute to virtue; what are pleasure and desire; what are pain and fear; and what art is capable of supplying a remedy for these things; by the aid of which a man when infected with these feelings may easily escape, or else perhaps may never be infected at all: what folly is, what intemperance, what committing injustice, what the whole multitude of other diseases, which it is the nature of all destructive vice to engender; and also what are the means by which they can be averted. And also, on the contrary, what justice is, what prudence is, and temperance, and manly courage, and deliberate wisdom, and in short what each virtue is, and what the mastery over the passions is, and in what way each of these virtues is usually produced.

Travel also through the greatest and most perfect being, namely this world, and consider all its parts, how they are separated in respect of place and united in respect of power; and also what is this invisible chain of harmony and unity, which connects all those parts; and if while considering those matters, thou canst not easily comprehend what thou seekest to know, persevere and be not wearied; for these matters are not attainable without a struggle, but they are only found out with difficulty and by means of much and great labour; on which account the man fond of learning is taken up to the field of Sichem; and the name Sichem, being interpreted means, "a shoulder," and intimates labour, since it is on the shoulders that men are accustomed to bear burdens. As Moses also mentions in another passage, when speaking of a certain athlete he pro-

ceeds in this manner, "He put his shoulder to the labour and became a husbandman."*

So that never, O my mind, do thou become effeminate and yield; but even if any thing does appear difficult to be discovered by contemplation, still opening the seeing faculties that are in thyself, look inwards and investigate existing things more accurately, and never close thy eyes whether intentionally or unintentionally; for sleep is a blind thing as wakefulness is a sharp-sighted thing. And it is well to be content if by assiduity in investigation it is granted to thee to arrive at a correct conception of the objects of thy search. Do you not see that the scripture says that a lofty oak was planted in Sichem? meaning under this figurative expression to represent the labour of instruction which never gives in, and never bends through weariness, but is solid, firm, and invincible, which the man who wishes to be perfect must of necessity exert, in order that the tribunal of the soul, by name Dinah, for the interpretation of the name Dinah is "judgment" may not be seized by the exertions of that man who, being a plotter against prudence, is labouring in an opposite direction.

For he who bears the same name as this place, namely Sichem, the son of Hamor, that is, of irrational nature; for the name Hamor means "an ass;" giving himself up to folly and being bred up with shamelessness and audacity, infamous man that he was, attempted to pollute and to defile the judicial faculties of the mind; if the pupils and friends of wisdom, Sichem and Levi, had not speedily come up, having made the defences of their house safe, and destroyed those who were still involved in the labour devoted to pleasure and to the indulgence of the passions and uncircumcised. For though there was a sacred scripture that, "There should be no harlot among the daughters of the seer, Israel,"† these men, having ravished a virgin soul, hoped to escape notice; for there is never a scarcity of avengers against those who violate treaties; but even though some persons fancy there may be, they will only fancy it, and will in the reality of the fact be proved to entertain a false opinion.

For justice hates the wicked, and is implacable, and a relentless avenger of all unrighteous actions, overthrowing the ranks of those who defile virtue, and when they are overthrown, then

* Genesis xlix. 15. † Genesis xxxiv. 1.

again the soul, which before appeared to be defiled, changes and returns to its virgin state. I say, which appeared to be defiled, because, in fact, it never was defiled; for of involuntary accidents that which affects the patient is not in reality his suffering, just as what is done by a person who does wrong unintentionally, the wrong is not really his action.

A TREATISE

ON THE QUESTION

WHO IS THE HEIR OF DIVINE THINGS.

I. In the treatise preceding the present one, we discussed the question of rewards to the best of our ability. Our present purpose is to examine who is the heir of the things of God; for after the wise man heard the oracle, which being divinely given, said, "Thy reward is exceedingly great;"* he inquired, saying, "What wilt thou give me, O master? And I shall depart childless: but my son who is the child of my handmaid will inherit after me, this Eliezer of Damascus." And in another place he says, "Since thou hast not given me any seed, but one born in my house shall be my heir." And yet who would not have been amazed at the dignity and greatness of him who delivered this oracle, so as to become silent and mute before him, if not out of fear, still at all events from excess of joy? For excessive griefs stop the mouth, and so also do excessive joys; on which account Moses confesses that he is "a man of a slight voice and slow of speech from the time when God first began to converse with him."†

And this testimony of the prophet is unerring; for it is natural for the organs of speech to be checked, and for the reason which is collected in the mind to be borne onwards with unrestrained impetuosity, philosophically examining the unceasing beauty of ideas not of words, with fluent and sublime power; and the most admirable virtues are boldness and freedom of speech at suitable times towards one's betters, so that the sentence in the comic poet appears to me to be uttered with truth rather than with comic humour:—

* Genesis xv. 1. † Exodus iv. 10.

If a slave is always dumb,
He is scarcely worth a crumb:
Let him, freely told, boldly speak.

II. When then has a slave freedom of speech towards his master? Is it not when he is conscious that he has not wronged him, but that he has done and said everything with a view to the advantage of his owner? When therefore is it proper for the servant of God to use freedom of speech to the ruler and master of himself, and of the whole word? Is it not when he is free from all sins, and is aware in his conscience that he loves his master, feeling more joy at the fact of being a servant of God, than he would if he were sovereign over the whole race of mankind, and were invested without any effort on his part with the supreme authority over land and sea. And he mentions the ministrations and services by which Abraham displayed his love to his master in the last sentence of the divine oracle given to his son, "I will give to thee and to thy seed all this land, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because Abraham thy father obeyed my voice, and kept all my precepts, and all my commandments, and my laws, and my judgments."* And it is the greatest possible praise of a servant that he does not neglect a single thing of the commandments which his master lays upon him, but that he labours earnestly without any hesitation and with all his vigour, and even beyond his power to perform them all with a well affected mind.

III. There are persons, then, to whom it is becoming to listen but not to speak, with respect to whom it is said, "Be silent and hear,"† a very admirable injunction; for ignorance is a very bad and a very audacious thing, the first remedy for which is silence, and the second, attention to those who present you with anything worthy of your listening to. Let no one, however, think that this is all that is signified by those few words, "Be silent and hear;" but that there is also something greater in them which may give a lesson to any one. For these words do not recommend you only to be silent with your tongues, and to hear with your ears, but also to conduct yourself thus in both these respects in your soul; for many persons when they have come to listen to some one, have nevertheless not come with their minds, but wander outside,

* Genesis xxvi. 3. † Deuteronomy xxvii. 9.

and keep on thinking of thousands upon thousands of things within themselves, whether concerning their relations, or strangers, or themselves, which at that moment they ought not to remember at all, but which in short they, re-collecting to themselves in regular order, and thus by reason of the excessive tumult which they keep alive in themselves, they are unable to hear the speaker. For he speaks as if he were not among men, but among inanimate statues who have indeed ears, but no sense of hearing.

If, therefore, the mind chooses to associate neither with things wandering about outside, nor with those which are stored up within it, but, remaining quiet and silent, directs its whole attention to the speaker, keeping silent in accordance with the injunction of Moses, it will be able to listen with all attention, but otherwise it would not be able to do so.

IV. Silence, then, is a desirable thing for those who are ignorant, but for those who desire knowledge, and who have at the same time a love for their master's freedom of speech, is a most necessary possession. Accordingly it is said, in the book of Exodus, "The Lord will fight for us, and you will be silent."* And, immediately afterwards, there is added a scripture in the following words: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Why dost thou cry unto me?" As it is proper for those persons to be silent who can say nothing worthy of being listened to, and for those to speak who, through love of wisdom, believe in God; and not only to speak quietly but to cry out with exceeding noise, not indeed with the noise of the mouth and tongue, by means of which they say that the air is affected with a rotatory motion, and so is rendered capable of being perceived by the hearing, but by the all-instructed and very loudly speaking organ of that voice of which no mortal man is the hearer, but only the uncreated and immortal God.

For the well-arranged and carefully attuned melody of that harmony which is perceptible by the intellect, the invisible musician, perceptible by the intellect, is alone able to comprehend; but no one of those involved in the entanglements of the outward senses can appreciate it. Accordingly, when the entire organ of the mind sounds according to the symphony of the diapason and of the double diapason, the hearer, as it were, asks (for he does not ask in reality, since everything is known

* Exodus xiv. 4.

to God), "Why dost thou cry unto me?" Is it in supplication that evils may be averted, or in thankfulness for a participation in good things which have been already enjoyed, or for a combination of both reasons?

V. But the man who appears to be endued with a thin voice, and with slowness of speech, and to be almost dumb, is nevertheless found to be talkative, so that in one place he is represented not merely as speaking, but even as crying out; and, in another, as exerting a ceaseless and uninterrupted flow of words; for, says the scripture, "Moses spoke, and God answered him with a voice."* He did not speak in brief periods or sentences, but in one continuously extended speech: and God also instructed him, not in brief sentences, but gave him one unbroken and continuous answer. And whenever there is an answer, there then must of necessity have been, in every case, a question. But whenever any one puts a question it is respecting something which he does not know, because he is desirous to learn; inasmuch as he is aware that there is nothing so useful with regard to acquiring knowledge as to ask, to inquire, to investigate, to appear to know nothing, and not to have an idea that one comprehends anything firmly.

The wise, therefore, take God for their teacher and instructor; and those who are less perfectly initiated in wisdom take the wise men for theirs. On which account they say, also, "Do thou speak with us, and let not God speak to us, lest we die."† And the virtuous man uses such freedom of speech as not only to speak and cry out, but even to advance positive claims with true confidence and genuine feeling; for the expression, "If thou forgivest them their sin, forgive them; and if not, then wipe me out of the book which thou hast written."‡ And this sentence also, "Did I conceive all this people in my womb? Or have I brought them forth, that thou sayest unto me, Take them up into thy bosom, as a nurse takes her sucking child."§ And also that passage where we read, "From whence am I to get flesh to give to all this people, because they cry unto me? Shall sheep and oxen be sacrificed, or shall all the fish of the sea be collected together, to satisfy them?" And again, "Lord, why hast thou afflicted this people?" And again, "Why hast thou sent me?" And, in another place, "From the time that

* Exodus xix. 19.
† Exodus xx. 19.
‡ Exodus xxxii. 32.
§ Numbers xi. 11.

of the law.

And freedom of speech is nearly akin to friendship; sir to whom would any one speak with more freedom than to own friend? very appropriately therefore is Moses spoken in the scriptures as dear to God, when he goes through account of all the dangers which he had incurred by reason his boldness, in such a way that they seem to deserve to attributed to friendship rather than to arrogance; for audac belongs to the character of the arrogant man; but good co fidence belongs to the friend.

VI. But consider again that confidence is tempered wi prudent caution; for the question, "What wilt thou give me?"† displays confidence, and the addition, "O maste exhibits prudent confidence. And being in the habit of usi two causes or two appellations, with respect to the cause of things, namely the title of Lord, and also that of God, he h in this instance used neither of them, but calls them by the nar of master, speaking with caution and with exceeding propriet and indeed the two appellations lord and master, are said be synonymous. But even if the two names are one and tl same things, still the titles differ in respect of the meani attached to them; for the title lord, κύριος, is derived fro the word, κῦρος authority, which is a firm thing, in contr distinction to that which is infirm and invalid, ἄκυρον. B the term master, δεσπότης, is derived from δεσμὸς, a chain: fro

holding it together in such a manner as to be insoluble, and binding up again what portions of it are dissolved.

But he who says, "Master, what wilt thou give unto me?" does, in the real meaning of his words say, this, "I am not ignorant of thy overpowering might, and I know the formidable nature of thy sovereignty: I fear and tremble, and again I feel confidence; for thou hast given me an oracular command not fear, thou hast given to me the tongue of instruction, that I might know when I ought to speak; thou hast unloosened my mouth which before was sewed up, thou hast opened it, and hast also made it articulate; thou hast appointed it to utter what ought to be spoken, confirming that sacred oracle, "I will open thy mouth, and I will tell thee what thou oughtest to speak." * For who was I, that thou shouldest give me a portion of thy speech, that thou shouldest promise me a reward as it it were my due, namely, a more perfect blessing of thy grace and bounty? Am I not an emigrant from my country? am I not driven away from my kindred? am I not banished and alienated from my father's house? do not all men call me an outcast and a fugitive, a desolate and dishonoured man? but thou, O master, art my country, thou art my kindred, thou art my paternal hearth, thou art my honour, thou art my freedom of speech, my great, and famous, and inalienable wealth, why therefore shall I not have courage to say what I think? and why shall I not ask questions, when I desire to learn something more?

But nevertheless, though I say that I feel confidence, I do again confess that I am stricken with awe and amazement, and that I do not feel within myself an unmixed spirit of battle, but fear mingled with confidence, as perhaps many people will easily imagine, a closely combined conjunction of the two feelings; therefore I drink insatiably of this well-mixed cup, which persuades me neither to speak freely without prudent caution; nor, on the other hand, to think so much of caution as to lose my freedom of speech. For I have learnt to appreciate my own nothingness, and to look up to the excessive and unapproachable height of thy munificence and whenever I know that I am myself "but dust and ashes," or even, what is still more worthless, if there is any such thing, then I feel confidence to approach thee, humbling myself, and casting myself down to

* Exodus iv. 12.

approach the Creator, when he recognised his own nothingn
But the expression, "What wilt thou give me?" is not so m
the language of one who is in doubt, as of one feeling
expressing gratitude at the multitude and greatness of
blessings which he has already enjoyed. "What wilt t
give me?" for, in fact, what more is there left for me to
pect? for, O bountiful God! thy graces and mercies
boundless and unlimited, and they have no boundary and
end, bursting up like fountains full of perfection, which
continually drawn upon and are never dry. And it is wo
while to contemplate, not merely the ever-abounding torr
of thy bounties, but also those fields of ours which are i
gated by them; for if a superfluous and too excessive stre
be poured over them, then the place will become a mar
and swampy plain instead of fertile land: for our land
need of irrigation, carefully measured out with a view to ca
fertility, and not unmeasured. And on this account I
ask, What wilt thou give me, thou who hast already
stowed on me unspeakable mercies, and almost all things,
that mortal nature is incapable of containing them? For w
remains that I wish to know, and to have, and to acquire.
this: who could be worthy of thy works, who could deserv
inherit them?

"I shall depart from life childless;"† having receive
short-lived and ephemeral blessing, which speedily pa

tably received by immortality, it may pass all future time in freedom from all evil, for I know that thou hatest a barren and unproductive soul, thou who art thyself the supporter of things that have no existence, and the parent of all things. Since thou hast given especial grace to the race which has the faculty of seeing, so that it shall never be barren, and never be childless; and as I myself have been assigned to that race as a part of it, I am justly desirous of an heir; for, perceiving that that race is inextinguishable, I think it would be a most shameful thing of me to be indifferent to the sight of my own nature, separated from all that is good.

Therefore I am a suppliant to thee, and I implore thee, that those seeds and sparks being kindled and cherished, the saving light of virtue may burn up and give light, which being borne on like a torch, delivered from hand to hand in constant succession, may last as long as the world. Moreover, thou hast inspired those men who practise virtue with a desire for children of the sowing and generation of the soul; and they, having received such a portion have, in their joy, spoken and said, "The children which God hath mercifully given to thy servant,"* of whom migration is the nurse and guardian, whose souls are simple, and tender, and well disposed, being calculated easily to receive the beautiful and most God-like impressions of virtue; and teach me also this saying, "Whether the son of Meshech, my servant, born in my house, is competent to become the inheritor of thy graces," for up to this time I have not received the son whom I hoped for, and of the one whom I have received I have no hope.

VIII. But who Meshech is, and who her son is, must be examined in no superficial manner. Now the interpretation of the name Meshech is, "out of a kiss;" but a kiss differs from loving; for the one exhibits usually a discovery of souls united together by good-will, but the other intimates only a bare and superficial salutation when some necessity has brought the two parties to the same place. For as the meaning "to stoop" (κύπτειν) is not contained in (ἀνακύπτειν) "to lift up the head," nor "to drink" (πίνω) in, "to absorb" (καταπίνω), nor "a horse" (ἵππος) in the word (μάρσιππος) "a bag," so also "to love" (φιλεῖν) is not necessarily contained in "to kiss" (καταφιλεῖν); since men yielding to the bitter necessities of life

* Genesis xxxiii. 5.

slave or one bought with a price, but born in the house, ar
some sense, a fellow citizen with themselves. Well, one
of these men have learnt to kiss this, not to love it; bu
other class have learnt to love it to excess, and to think
object of desire above all things.

But Laban, the hater of virtue, will neither be able to
the virtues which are assigned to the man who is incline
the practice of virtue, but, making his own life to depen
hypocrisy and false pretences, he, as if indignant, for he is
in reality affected, says, "I was not accounted worthy to
my children and my daughters;"* speaking very natu
and decorously, for we have all been taught to hate ir
irreconcileably. Do thou, therefore, love the virtues,
embrace them with thy soul, and then you will be not at
desirous to kiss, which is but the false money of friendship
"For have they not yet any part or inheritance in thy hou
have they not been reckoned as aliens before thee? and h
not thou sold them and devoured the money?†" so that
could neither at any subsequent time recover it, after hav
devoured the price of their safety and their ransom. Do
pretend, therefore, to wish to kiss, or else to wage endless
against all the judges? But Aaron will not kiss Mos
though he will love him with the genuine affection of
heart. "For," says the scripture, "he loved him, and th
embraced one another."‡

rejoices in a life which is no life. And the mingled kind is that one which often ascends upwards, being conducted upwards by the better part, and it gazes on divine things, and contemplates them; but still it often turns back, being dragged in the contrary direction by the worse part: and when the portion of the better life, as if placed in the balance of a scale, outweighs the whole, then the weight of the opposite kinds of life is dragged in the contrary direction, so that the lightest weight appears to be in the opposite scale.

But Moses having, without any contest or doubt, given the crown of victory to that kind of life which is life to God, brings that forward as the best, likening the other two kinds to two women, one of whom he calls beloved, and the other hated, giving them both most appropriate names. For who is there who is not at times influenced by the pleasures and delights which he receives by means of his eyes, or by those which reach him through the medium of his ears, or of his sense of taste, or of his sense of smell and touch? And who is there who does not hate the contrary things, want and self-denial, and a life of austerity, and seeking after knowledge, which has never any share in amusement or laughter, but is full of gravity, and cares and labours, loving contemplation, an enemy to ignorance, superior to money, and glory, and pleasure, but under the dominion of temperance and true glory, and of that wealth which sees and is not blind? These, then, are at all times the eldest offspring of wisdom.

X. But Moses thinks those things which, though younger in point of time are nevertheless honourable by nature, worthy of the first honours of the birth-right, giving them a double share, and taking from the others half of their share; for, says he, "If a man have two wives, the one beloved and the other hated, and if they both bear children, then when he is about to distribute his property, he shall not be able to give the portion belonging to the first-born to the son of her who is beloved,"* namely, to the son of pleasure; for he is but young, even though in point of time he may be old; but he looks upon the son of her who is hated, namely, of wisdom, as the elder, ever since he was a child; and, accordingly, to him he has assigned a double share.

But because we have, on a previous occasion, explained the

* Deuteronomy xxi. 15.

figurative sense of this passage, we will now pass on to what comes next, to the passage before us; after we have first explained this point, that "God is said to have opened the womb of her who was hated," and thus to have caused to arise an offspring of virtuous practices and good actions, while the wife, who was reputed to be beloved, was from that time forth barren: "For the Lord," says the scripture, "seeing that Leah was hated, opened her womb, but Rachel was barren."* Is it not then the case, that when the soul is pregnant, and begins to bring forth such things as are becoming to the soul, then all those objects of the outward senses are barren and unproductive, objects to which the salutation belongs, which is given by a kiss and not by genuine affection?

XI. Each individual then among us is the son of life according to the outward sense, which he calls Meshech, honouring and admiring the foster-mother and nurse of the mortal race, namely, the outward sense, whom also, when the earthly mind, by name Adam, saw after it had been created, he named her life his own death; for, says the scripture, "Adam called his wife's name Eve (ζωή), because she was the mother of all living,"† that is to say, of those who are in real truth dead as to the life of the soul: but they who really live have wisdom for their mother and the outward sense for their slave, which has been created by nature for the purpose of ministering to knowledge; and the name of that man who was born of life (ζωή), whom we have recognized by a kiss, he calls Damascus, which name, being interpreted, means "the blood of a sack;" by this figurative language, calling the body a sack, with great power and felicity; and by blood, he means the life which depends on the blood.

For since the soul is spoken of in two ways, first of all as a whole, secondly, as to the dominant part of it, which, to speak properly, is the soul of the soul, just as the eye is both the whole orb, and also the most important part of that orb, that namely by which we see; it seemed good to the law-giver that the essence of the soul should likewise be two-fold; blood being the essence of the entire soul, and the divine Spirit being the essence of the dominant part of it: accordingly he says, in express words, "The soul of all flesh is the blood thereof."‡ He does well here to attribute the flow of blood to

* Genesis xxix. 31. † Genesis iii. 20. ‡ Genesis ix. 8.

the mass of flesh, combining two things appropriate to one another; but the essence of the mind he has not made to depend on any created thing, but has represented it as breathed into man by God from above. For, says Moses, "The Creator of the universe breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul,"* who also, it is recorded, was fashioned after the image of the Creator.

XII. So that the race of mankind also is twofold, the one being the race of those who live by the divine Spirit and reason; the other of those who exist according to blood and the pleasure of the flesh. This species is formed of the earth, but that other is an accurate copy of the divine image; and that description of us which is but fashioned clay, and which is kneaded up with blood, has need, in no slight degree, of assistance from God; on which account it is said, this Damascus of Eleazar.† But the name Eleazar, being interpreted, means, "God is my helper." Since the mass of the body, which is filled with blood, being of itself easily dissolved and dead, has its existence through, and is kept alive by, the providence of God, who holds his arm and shield of defence over it, while our race cannot, by any resources of its own, exist in a state of firmness and safety for a single day.

Do you not see that the second of the sons of Moses has also the same name as this man? For "the name of the second," says the scripture, "was Eleazar."‡ And he adds the reason: "for the Lord has been my helper, and has delivered me out of the hand of Pharaoh." But those who are still companions of that life which owes its existence to blood, and which is appreciable by the outward senses, are attacked by that disposition which is such a formidable disperser of piety, by name Pharaoh; from whose sovereignty, full as it is of lawlessness and cruelty, it is impossible to escape, unless Eleazar be born in the soul, and unless one puts one's hope of succour in the only Saviour.

And it is with particular beauty that he speaks of Damascus with reference, not to his father, but to his mother; in order to show that the soul depending on blood, by means of which the brute animals live, is akin properly to the female race; the race of his mother, and has no share in the male race. But this is not the case with virtue, that is with Sarah; for she

* Genesis ii. 7. † Genesis xv. 2. ‡ Exodus xviii. 4.

has none but a male offspring, being borne only of God who is the father of all things, being that authority which has no mother. "For truly," says the scripture, "she is my sister by my father's side, but not by my mother's."*

XIII. We have now explained what it was necessary for you to be apprised of as a preliminary. For the first part of the argument had a sort of enigmatical obscurity. But we must examine with more accurate particularity what the man who is fond of learning seeks. Perhaps then it is something of this sort: to know whether any one who is desirous of that life which is dependent on blood and who claims an interest in the objects of the outward sense, can become an inheritor of incorporeal and divine things? for of such only he who is inspired from above is thought worthy, having received a portion of heavenly and divine inheritance, being in fact the most pure mind, disregarding not merely the body but also the other fragment of the soul, which being devoid of reason is mixed up with blood, kindling the fervid passions and excited appetites. Accordingly it pushes its inquiries in this manner: since you have not given to me a seed which is capable of becoming its own instructor, namely, that seed which is able to be comprehended by the intellect, "Shall the slave born in my house be my heir?" the offspring of that life which is dependent upon blood. Then God, making haste, anticipated the speaker, sending, as one may say, instruction on in advance of speech. "For immediately," says the scripture, "the voice of God came to him, saying, He shall not be thy heir;"‡ nor any one else of those who come to an exhibition of the outward senses. For the incorporeal natures are the inheritors of those things which can only be appreciated by the intellect.

And it has been especially observed here, that the scripture does not say he spoke to him or conversed with him, but the expression is, "The voice of God came to him;" as if God uttering a loud and unceasing sound, in order that the voice being thus distributed into every soul, might leave no part destitute of proper instruction, but that all parts might every where be filled with healthy learning.

XIV. Who, then, shall be the heir? Not that reasoning which remains in the prison of the body according to its own voluntary intention, but that which is loosened from those

* Genesis xx. 12. † Genesis xv. 3.

bonds and emancipated, and which has advanced beyond the walls, and if it be possible to say so, has itself forsaken itself. "For he," says the scripture, "who shall come out from thee, he shall be thy heir." Therefore if any desire comes upon thee, O soul, to be the inheritor of the good things of God, leave not only thy country,* the body, and thy kindred, the outward senses, and thy father's house, that is speech; but also flee from thyself, and depart out of thyself, like the Cerybantes, or those possessed with demons, being driven to frenzy, and inspired by some prophetic inspiration. For while the mind is in a state of enthusiastic inspiration, and while it is no longer mistress of itself, but is agitated and drawn into frenzy by heavenly love, and drawn upwards to that object, truth removing all impediments out of its way, and making every thing before it plain, that so it may advance by a level and easy road, its destiny is to become an inheritor of the things of God.

But, O mind! take confidence, and explain to us how you depart and emigrate from those former things, you who utter things perceptible only by the intellect to those who have been taught to hear rightly, always saying, I emigrated from my sojourn in the body when I learnt to despise the flesh, and I emigrated from the outward sense when I learnt to look upon the objects of outward sense as things which had no existence in reality—condemning its judicial faculties as spurious and corrupted, and full of false opinion, and also condemning the objects submitted to that judgment as speciously devised to allure and to deceive, and to snatch the truth from out of the middle of nature. Again, I departed from speech when I convicted it of great unreasonableness, although it talked of sublime subjects and puffed itself up; for it dared a not inconsiderable deed of daring, namely, to show me bodies through the medium of shadows, and things by means of words, which was impossible; therefore it kept stumbling about over repeated obstacles, and kept on talking vainly, being unable by common expressions to give a clear representation and understanding of the peculiar properties of the subjects with which it was dealing. But I, learning by experience, like an infant and untaught child, decided that it was better to depart from all these things, and to attribute the powers of each to God, who makes and consolidates

* Genesis xii. 1

perceiving, and
ing, and comprehending, but offer and dedicate these thi
him who is the cause of thinking accurately, and of co
hending without being deceived.

XV. But it is the holier of the all-sacred places i
temple which receives this offering; for it appears that
are two; the one discernible only by the intellect, and the
perceptible by the outward senses. Now, of these crea
which are perceptible by the outward senses, this world is
receptacle; but of those things which are truly invisible,
world, which is discernible only by the intellect, is the m
zine: but he that goes out from us and desires to becom
attendant of God, is the inheritor of the much celebr
wealth of nature; he bears witness, who says, "He brou
him out, and said unto him, Look up to heaven;"* since
is the treasury of the good things of God. "May the Lo
says he, "open to thee the treasury of his good things,†"—t
is, the heaven; out of which he who furnishes the supply d
incessantly rain the most perfect joys.

Look up, then, so as to convict the blind race of comm
men, which, though it appears to see, is blind. For how
it be otherwise than blind, when it sees evil instead of go
and what is unjust instead of what is just, and the indulge
of the passions, instead of a mastery over them, and thi
mortal, instead of things immortal, and when it runs a
from its monitors and correctors, and from conviction and

word, the heavenly, incorruptible food of the soul, which is food of contemplation: but the others fix their eyes on garlic and onions, food which causes pain to the eyes, and troubles the sight, and makes men wink, and on other unsavoury food, of leeks, and dead fish, the appropriate provender of Egypt. "For," says the scripture, "we remembered the fish which we ate in Egypt without payment, and the gourds, and the cucumbers, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our soul is dry, and our eyes behold nothing but manna."*

XVI. And the statement, "He led him out"† (ἐξήγαγεν αὐτὸν ἔξω), has a bearing also on moral considerations, though some persons, through their want of instruction in moral philosophy, are accustomed to ridicule it, saying, "For is any one ever led out in (ἔξω εἰσάγεται), or led in out (εἰσέρχεται ἔξω)?" "Certainly," I would reply, "you ridiculous and very foolish man; for you have never learnt how to trace the dispositions of the soul; but by this language of yours you only seek to understand those motions of bodies which are exerted in change of place. On which account it seems paradoxical to you to speak of any one coming out into (ἐξέρχεται εἴσω), or going in out (ἐξέρχεται ἔξω); but to those acquainted with Moses none of these things seem inconsistent."

Would you not say that the perfect high priest when, being in the inmost shrine, he is performing his national sacrifices, is both within and without at the same time? within in respect of his visible body, but without in respect of his soul, which is roaming about and wandering? And again, on the other hand, would you not say that a man who was not of the family consecrated to the priesthood, but who was a lover of God and beloved by God, though standing without the holy shrine, was nevertheless in reality in its inmost parts? looking upon his whole life in the body as a sojourning in a foreign land; but while he is able to live only in the soul, then he thinks that he is abiding in his own country.

For every fool is outside of friendship, even though he may not depart for one moment from daily association with people But every wise man is within friendship, even if he be dwelling at a distance, not merely in a different country, but in another climate and region of the world. But, according to Moses, a friend is so near to one as to differ in no respect from one's

* Numbers xi. 5. † Genesis xv. 5.

own soul, for he says, "the friend who is like thy soul."* And again he says, "The priest shall not be a man by himself, when he goeth into the holy of holies, until he cometh out;"† speaking not with reference to the motions of the body, but to those of the soul; for the mind, while it is offering holy sacrifices to God in all purity, is not a human but a divine mind; but when it is serving any human object, it then descends from heaven and becomes changed, or rather it falls to the earth and goes out, even though the mind may still remain within.

Very correctly, therefore, it is said, he led him out (ἐξήγαγεν ἔξω) of the prison according to the body, of the caves existing in he external senses, of the sophistries displayed in deceitful speech; and beyond all this, out of himself and out of the idea that by his own self-exerted, self-implanted, and independent power he was able to conceive and comprehend.

XVII. And after he has conducted him out, he says to him, "Look up to heaven, and count the stars, if thou art able to number them; thus shall be thy seed."‡ He says very beautifully, "Thus shall be thy seed," not so great shall it be, equal in number to the stars; for he does not intend here to allude to their multitude only, but also to an infinite number of other circumstances which contribute to entire and perfect happiness. "Thus shall thy seed be," says God, as the ethereal firmament which thou beholdest, so heavenly, so full of unshadowed and pure brilliancy (for night is driven away from heaven, and darkness from virtue,) most thoroughly like the stars, beautifully adorned, having an arrangement which knows no deviation, but which is always the same and proceeding in the same way. For he means him to speak of the soul of the wise man as a copy of heaven, or, if one may use such a hyperbolical expression, as an actual heaven upon earth, having pure appearances in the air, and well arranged motions, and harmonious progress, and periodical revolutions of divine character, star-like and brilliant rays of virtue.

But if it is impossible to find out the number of the stars which are perceptible by the outward senses, how much more so must it be to count those which are discernible only by the intellect? for in proportion, I suppose, as that which judges is better or worse than that which is judged of (for the mind is

* Deut. xiii. 6. † Leviticus xvi. 17. ‡ Genesis xv. 5.

better than the outward sense, and the outward sense is duller than the intellect; in the same ratio do the subjects of the judgment differ: so that the objects of the intellect are infinitely superior to those of the outward senses; for the eyes in the body are the smallest imaginable portion of the eye of the soul; for the one is like the sun, but the others only resemble lamps, which are at one time lighted and at another extinguished.

XVIII. Therefore that is a necessary addition which is subjoined, "Abraham believed in God,"* to the praise of him who did thus believe. And yet, perhaps, some one may say, "Do you judge this worthy of praise? who would not give his attention to God when saying or promising anything, even if he were the most wicked and impious of all men?" To whom we will reply, "Do not, do not, my good man, without further inquiry, either rob the wise man of his due praise, or attribute to unworthy persons that most perfect of the virtues, faith; and do not blame our opinion on this point; for if you are willing to enter upon a deeper investigation into this subject, and are not content with examining it superficially, you will then see clearly, that without the assistance or addition of something else, it is not easy to believe in God on account of that connection with mortality in which we are involved, which compels us to put some trust in money, and glory, and authority, and friends, and health, and vigour of body, and in numerous other things; but to wash off all these extraneous things, to disbelieve in creation, which is, in all respects, untrustworthy as far as regards itself, and to believe in the only true and faithful God, is the work of a great and heavenly mind, which is no longer allured or influenced by any of the circumstances usually affecting human life.

XIX. And it is well added in the scripture, "And it was counted to him for righteousness:" for nothing is so righteous as to have an unalloyed and entire belief in the only God.

But this, although both just and consistent with reason, was considered an incredible thing on account of the incredulity of the generality of men, whom the holy scripture condemns, saying, that "to anchor firmly and unchangeably on the only living God, is a thing to be admired among men, who have no possession of true unmingled good, but is not to

* Genesis xv. 6.

be wondered at if truth guide the judgment; but it is the especial attribute of justice.

XX. The scripture proceeds: "And he said unto him I am God, who brought thee out of the land of the Chaldæans, so as to give thee this land to inherit it." These words exhibit not only a promise, but a confirmation of an ancient promise; for the good which was previously bestowed upon him was the departure from the Chaldæan philosophy, which was occupied about the things of the air, which taught men to suppose that the world was not the work of God, but was God himself; and that good and evil is caused in the case of all existing things, by the motions and fixed periodical revolutions of the stars, and that on these motions the origin of all good and evil depends; and the equable (ὁμαλῆ) and regular motion of these bodies in heaven, persuaded those simple men to look upon these things as omens, for the name of the Chaldæans being interpreted is synonymous with equability (ὁμαλότης). But the new blessing which is promised is the acquisition of that wisdom which is not taught by the outward senses, but is comprehended by the pure mind, and by which the best of all emigrations is confirmed; when the soul departs from astronomy and learns to apply itself to natural philosophy, and to exchange unsure conjecture for certain apprehension, and, to speak with real truth, to quit the creature for the Creator, and the world for its father and maker; for the scriptures tell us, that the votaries of the Chaldæan philosophy believed in the heaven, but that he who abandoned that sect believed in the ruler of the heaven and the manager of the whole world, namely, in God. A very beautiful inheritance, greater perhaps than the power of him who receives it, but worthy of the greatness of the giver.

XXI. But it is not sufficient for the lover of wisdom to have a hope of good things, and to expect all kinds of admirable things, because of the predictions given to him, but unless he also knows the manner in which he is to arrive at the succession of his inheritance, he thinks it very grievous, inasmuch as he thirsts after knowledge, and has an insatiable desire of attaining to it; on which account he puts a question, saying, "O Lord God, how shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Perhaps some one may say that this question is at variance with perfect faith, for that to feel such a difficulty is

the part of one who doubts, but that it is the part of one who believes to seek for nothing further. We must say, therefore, that he both doubts and has believed, but not about the same matter, far from it, for he has believed that he is to be an inheritor of wisdom, but he only seeks to know the manner in which this event will take place; that it really will take place he does by all means confidently comprehend, in accordance with the divine promises.

Therefore the teacher having praised the desire for learning which he feels, begins his explanation with the first elementary instruction, in which this is set down as the first and most necessary thing, "Take for me." * The sentence is brief, but the meaning is great; for there are not a few things implied in these words. In the first place you have, says God, no goed thing of your own, but whatever you fancy that you have, another has bestowed it upon you. From which it is inferred that all things are the property of God who gives them, but that they do not belong to the creature which only existed after him, and which stretches forth its hands to take them. In the second place, he says, even if you take them, take them not for yourself, but think what is thus given you a loan or deposit, and be ready to restore it to him who has deposited it with, or contributed it to you, requiting an older favour with a newer one, and an original kindness with one proffered instead of it, as justice and propriety require.

XXII. For many men have become wicked in respect of such sacred deposits, having, through their immoderate covetousness improperly used the property of others as their own. But do thou, O good man! endeavour with all thy strength, not only to present what you have received without injury and without adulteration, but also to take even more care than that of such things, that he who has deposited them with you may have no grounds to blame the care which has been exercised by you. And what the Creator of man has deposited in your custody are soul, speech, and external sense; which are symbolically named a heifer, a ram, and a goat, in the sacred scriptures. But these things some persons have at once appropriated through self-love, but others have stored them up so as to be able to return them in due season. Now, of those who have appropriated them, it is impossible to tell the number; for

* Genesis xv. 9.

who of us is there who does not think his soul, and his speech, and his external senses, all taken together, to be his own property, thinking that to feel, and to speak, and to comprehend, depend upon himself alone? But of those who really preserve their faith holy and inviolate, the number is very small.

Such men attribute to God these three things: the soul, the external sense, and speech. For they have received all these things, not for themselves, but for him, in whose favour they naturally and appropriately confess that the energies according to each of these three things depend upon him, namely, the imaginations and apprehensions of the mind, the explanations of speech, and the perceptions of the outward senses. Those, now, who attribute these things to themselves, have received an allotment worthy of their own perverseness, namely, a soul fond of plotting against others, polluted with irrational passions, and enveloped in a multitude of vices; at one time eager to indulge in violent insolence through its gluttony and lasciviousness, as though it were in a brothel; at another time held fast by the multitude of its iniquities as in a prison, with wicked (not men but) actions which deserve to be led before all the judges. Secondly, speech insolent, loquacious, sharpened against the truth, injurious to all who come in its way, and bringing disgrace upon those who possess it. Thirdly, the external sense, insatiable, always filling itself with the objects of the outward senses, but through its immoderate appetites never able to be satisfied, disregarding all its monitors and correctors, so as to refuse to look upon or to listen to them, and to reject with disdain all that they say to it for its good. But those who take these things not for themselves but for God, attribute each one of them to him, guarding that which they have acquired in a truly holy and religious manner, keeping their mind, so that it shall think of nothing else but the things relating to God and to his excellencies, and their speech so as to make it, with unrestrained mouth, and with encomiums, and hymns, and announcements of happiness, honour the father of the universe, collecting together and exhibiting all its powers of interpretation and utterance in this one office; and regulating the external senses, so that forming a conception of the whole of that world which is perceptible by them, they may, in a guileless, honest, and pure manner, relate to the soul all the heaven and earth, and the natures whose home is between the

two, and all animals and plants, and their respective energies and faculties, and all their motions and their stationary existence.

For God has implanted in the mind a power of comprehending that world, which is appreciable only by the intellect, by its own power, but the invisible world by means of the external senses. And if any one were able in all his parts to live to God rather than to himself, looking by means of the external senses into those things which are their proper objects, for the sake of finding out the truth; and through the medium of the soul, investigating in a philosophical spirit the proper objects of intelligence, and those things which have a real existence, and by means of his organs of voice, singing hymns in praise of the world and of its Creator, he will have a happy and a blessed life.

XXIII. I think then that this is what intimated in the words, "Take for me;" God, intending to send down the perfection of his divine virtue from heaven to earth, out of pity for our race, in order that it might not be left destitute of a better portion, prepared in a symbolical manner the sacred tabernacle and the things in it, a thing made after the model and in imitation of wisdom. For he says that he has erected his oracle as a tabernacle in the midst of our impurity, in order that we may have something whereby we may be purified, washing off and cleansing all those things which dirt and defile our miserable life, full of all evil reputation as it is.

Let us now then see in what manner he has commanded us to bring in the different things which are to contribute to the furnishing of the tabernacle. "The Lord," says the scripture, "spake unto Moses saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and take ye first-fruits for me of whatever it shall seem good to your heart to take my first-fruits."* Therefore here also there is an injunction to take not for themselves but for God, examining who it is who gives these things, and doing no injury to what is given, but preserving it free from danger, and free from spot, perfect and entire. And the injunction, by which he orders the first fruits to be offered to himself, is full of doctrine; for in real truth the beginnings both of bodies and of things are investigated with reference to God alone; and search if you wish to understand everything, plants and animals, and arts and sciences.

Are then the first castings of the seed of plants, the actions

* Exodus xxv. 1.

of husbandry or the invisible works of invisible nature? What more need I ask? What are the works of men and other animals? Have not they parents as co-operating causes, as it were, and also nature as the primary and more important and real cause? And is not nature the fountain, and root, and foundation of all arts and sciences, or any other name you please to give to the oldest of principles, nature, upon which all speculations are built up? And if nature be not first laid as the foundation, everything is imperfect, and on this account some one seems to me to have said with great felicity:—

The first beginning is quite half the whole.

XXIV. Very appropriately therefore does the sacred scripture command the first-fruits to be offered up to the all-ruling God. And in another passage we read "The Lord spake unto Moses saying, Sanctify to me all the first born: all that is first brought forth, all that openeth the womb among the children of Israel, whether of man or beast is mine,"* so that it is openly asserted in these words, that all the first things, whether in point of time or of power, are the property of God, and most especially all the first-born; since the whole of that race which is imperishable shall justly be apportioned to the immortal God; and if there is anything, in short, which openeth the womb, whether of man which here means speech and reason, or of beast which signifies the outward sense and the body; for that which openeth the womb of all these things, whether of the mind, so as to enable it to comprehend the things appreciable only by the intellect, or of the speech so as to enable it to exercise the energies of voice, or of the external senses, so as to qualify them to receive the impressions which are made upon them by their appropriate subjects, or of the body to fit it for its appropriate stationary conditions or motions, is the invisible, spermatic, technical, and divine Word, which shall most properly be dedicated to the Father.

And, indeed, as are the beginnings of God so likewise are the ends of God; and Moses is a witness to this, where he commands to "separate off the end, and to confess that it is due to God."† The things in the world do also bear witness.

* Exodus xiii. 2.

† There is probably some corruption here. The marginal reference

How so? The beginning of a plant is the seed, and the end is the fruit, each of them being the work, not of husbandry, but of nature. Again, of knowledge the beginning is nature, as has been shown, but the end can never reach mankind, for no man is perfect in any branch of study whatever; but it is a plain truth, that all excellence and perfection belong to one Being alone; we therefore are borne on, for the future, on the confines of beginning and end, learning, teaching, tilling the ground, working up everything else, as if we were really effecting something, that the creature also may seem to be doing something; therefore, with a more perfect knowledge, Moses has confessed that the first-fruits and the end belong to God, speaking of the creation of the world, where he says, "In the beginning God created . . ."* And again he says, "God finished the heaven and the earth." Now therefore he says, "Take for me," assigning to himself what becomes him, and admonishing his hearer not to adulterate what is given to him, but to take care of it in a manner worthy of its importance. And again, in another passage, he who has need of nothing, and who on this account takes nothing, will confess that he does take something, for the sake of giving to his worshippers the feeling of piety, and of implanting in them an eagerness after holiness, and moreover sharpening their zeal in his service, as one who favourably receives the genuine worship and service of a willing soul, "For behold," says he, "I have taken the Levites instead of all the first-born that openeth the womb among the children of Israel; they shall be their ransom;"† therefore we take and give, but we are said to take with strict accuracy, but it is only by a metaphorical abuse of the term that we are said to give, for the reasons which I have already mentioned. And it is very felicitously that he has called the Levites a ransom, for nothing so completely conducts the mind to freedom as its fleeing for refuge to and becoming a suppliant of God; and this is what the consecrated tribe of the Levites particularly professes to be.

XXV. Having now, therefore, said as much as is proper on these subjects, let us proceed onwards to what comes next; for we have postponed the consideration of many things which

is to Numbers xxi. 41, and there are only thirty-five verses in the chapter. The same thing has occurred in one or two previous instances.

* Genesis i. 1. † Num. iii. 12.

ought to be examined into with exactness. "Take for me," says God, "a heifer which has never been yoked and has never been ill-treated, tender and young,"* and exulting; that is to say, a soul adapted easily to receive government, and instruction, and superintendence. "Take for me also a ram," that is to say, speech contentious and perfect, capable of dissecting and overthrowing the sophistries of those who advance contrary opinions, and capable also of ensuring safety, and good order, and regularity to him who uses it. "Take for me," also the external sense, which lives and directs all its energies to the world, which is perceptible by it, that is, "a goat," three complete years old, enjoying solid strength in a perfect number, having beginning, middle, and end. Besides all these things, "a turtle dove and a pigeon," that is to say, divine and human wisdom, both of them being winged, and being animals accustomed to soar on high, still different from one another, as much as genus differs from species or a copy from the model; for divine wisdom is fond of lonely places, loving solitude, on account of the only God, whose possession she is; and this is called a turtle-dove, symbolically; but the other is quiet and tame, and gregarious, haunting the cities of men, and rejoicing in its abode among mortals, and so they liken her to a pigeon.

XXVI. Moses appears to me to have intended figuratively to represent these virtues when he calls the midwives of the Egyptians, Shiphrah and Puah,† for the name Shiphrah, being interpreted, means "a little bird," and Puah means "red." Now it is the especial property of divine wisdom, like a bird, to be always soaring on high; but it is the characteristic of human wisdom to study modesty and temperance, so as to blush at all objects which are worthy to cause a blush; and as a very manifest proof of this the scripture says, "He took for himself all these things."‡ This is the praise of a virtuous man, who preserves the sacred deposit of those things which he has received, the soul, the outward sense, speech, divine wisdom, human knowledge, in a pure and guileless manner, not for himself, but only for him who has trusted him. After this the scripture proceeds to say, "And he divided them in the middle," not explaining who did so, in order that you may understand that it was the untaught God who divided them,

* Genesis xv. 9. † Exodus i. 15. ‡ Genesis xv. 10

and that he divided all the natures of bodies and of things one after another, which appeared to be closely fitted together and united by his word, which cuts through everything; which being sharpened to the finest possible edge, never ceases dividing all the objects of the outward senses, and when it has gone through them all, and arrived at the things which are called atoms and indivisible, then again this divider begins from them to divide those things which may be contemplated by the speculations of reason into unspeakable and indescribable portions, and to "beat the gold into thin plates,"* like hairs, as Moses says, making them into one length without breadth, like unsubstantial lines. Each therefore of the three victims he divided in the midst, dividing the soul into the rational and the irrational part, speech into truth and falsehood, and the outward sense into imaginations which can be and which cannot be comprehended; and these divisions he immediately places exactly opposite to one another, that is, the rational part opposite to the irrational, truth to falsehood, what is comprehensible to what is incomprehensible, leaving the birds undivided; for it was impossible to divide the incorporeal and divine sciences into contrarieties at variance with one another.

XXVII. But as the discussion on the subject of a division into equal portions, and on that of opposite contrarieties, is of great extent and of necessary importance, we will not wholly pass it by, nor will we dwell on it with prolixity, but, investigating it as it is, we will be content with such things as seem suitable to the occasion.

For as the Creator divided our soul and our limbs in the middle, so also, in the same manner, did he divide the essence of the universe when he made the world; for, having taken it, he began to divide it thus: in the first instance, he made two divisions, the heavy and the light, separating that which was thick from that which was more subtle. After that, he again made a second division of each, dividing the subtle part into air and fire, and the denser portion into water and earth; and, first of all, he laid down those elements, which are perceptible by the outward senses, to be, as it were, the foundations of the world which is perceptible by the outward senses. Again, he subdivided heavy and

* Exodus xxxix. 3.

light according to other ideas, for he divided the light into cold and hot; and the cold he called air, and that which was hot by nature he called fire. The heavy, again, he divided into wet and dry; and the dry he called land, and the wet he called water—and each of these, again, received other further subdivisions; for the land was divided into continents and islands, and the water into sea and rivers, and all drinkable springs, and the air was divided into the solstices of summer and winter; fire, also, was divided into what is useful (but fire is a most insatiable and destructive thing), and also by a different division into what is saving; and this division was assigned for the conformation of the heaven.

But as he divided the things when entire, so also did he divide the particular divisions, some of which were animated and others inanimate; and of those which were inanimate he made a division into those which always remain in the same place, the bond of which is habit, and those which move, not indeed in the way of changing their place, but so as to grow, which indescribable nature has vivified. Again of these, those which are of wild materials are productive of wild fruits, which are the food of brute beasts; but others producing good fruit, the cultivation of which has called forth diligent superintendence and care, and these produce fruit for the tamest of all animals, namely, for man, that he may enjoy them. And not only did he divide the inanimate things, and those which had received a soul and vitality in one manner—for of these he defined one species as that of irrational, and one as that of rational animals—but he also again subdivided each of these things, dividing the irrational into the wild and the tame species, and the rational into the mortal and the immortal. Again, of the mortal he made two divisions, one of which he called men, and the other women; and, in the same manner, he divided the irrational animals into male and female.

And these things were also subjected to other necessary divisions, which made distinctions between them; winged animals being distinguished from terrestrial, terrestrial from aquatic creatures, and aquatic creatures, again, from both extremities. Thus God, having sharpened his own word, the divider of all things, divides the essence of the universe which is destitute of form, and destitute of all distinctive qualities, and the four elements of the world which were separated from

this essence, and the plants and animals which were consolidated by means of these elements.

XXVIII. But since Moses not only uses the expression, "he divided," but says further, "he divided in the midst," it is necessary to say a few words on the subject of equal divisions; for that which is divided skilfully just in the middle makes two equal divisions. And no man could ever possibly divide anything into two exactly equal parts; but it is inevitable that one of the divisions must fall a little short, or exceed a little, if not much, at all events by a small quantity, in every instance, which indeed escapes the perception of our outward senses which attend only to the larger and more tangible burdens of nature and custom, but which are unable to comprehend atoms and indivisible things. But it is established by the incorruptible word of truth that there is nothing equal in inequality.

God alone therefore seems to be exactly just, and to be the only being able to divide in the middle bodies and things, in such a manner that none of the divisions shall be greater or less than the other by the smallest and most indivisible portion, and he alone is able to attain to sublime and perfect equality.

If therefore there were but one idea of perfect equality, what has been said would be quite sufficient for the purpose. But as there are many, we must not hesitate to add some considerations which are suitable. For the word "equal" is used in one sense when speaking of numbers, as when we say that two are equal to two, and three to three; and speak of other numbers in the same manner. But in another sense when speaking of magnitude, as equal in length or breadth, or depth, which are all different proportions. For wrestler compared with wrestler, or cubit with cubit are equal in magnitude but different in power, as is the case also with measures and weights. But the idea of equality is a necessary one, and so is that of equality in proportion, according to which a few things are looked upon as equal to many, and small things are equal to larger ones. And their proportionate equality, cities are accustomed to use at suitable times, when they command every citizen to contribute an equal share of his property, not equal in number, but in proportion to the value of his assessment, so that in some cases he who

contributes a hundred drachms will appear to have brought an equal sum with him who contributes a talent.

XXIX. These things being thus previously sketched out, see now how God, dividing things in the middle, has divided them into equal portions according to all the ideas of equality which occur in the creation of the universe. He has divided the heavy things so as to make them equal in number to the light ones, two to two; that is to say, so that the earth and the water, being things of weight, are equal in number to those which are by nature light, air and fire. Again, he has made one equal to one, the driest thing to the wettest thing, the earth to the water; and the coldest thing to the hottest thing, the air to the fire, So, in the same manner, he has divided light from darkness, and day from night, and summer from winter, and autumn from spring; and so on.

Again, he has divided things so as to make his divisions equal in point of magnitude; such as the parallel cycles in heaven, and those which belong to the equinoxes both of spring and autumn, and those which belong to the winter and summer solstice. And on the earth he has divided the zones, two being equal to one another, which being placed close to the poles are frozen with cold, and on this account are uninhabitable. And two he has placed on the borders between these two and the torrid zone, and these two they say are the abode of a happy temperature of the air, one of them lying towards the south and the other towards the north.

Now the divisions of time are equal in point of length, the longest day being equal to the longest night, and again the shortest day being equal to the shortest night, and the mean length of day to the mean length of night. And the equal magnitude of other days and nights appears to be indicated chiefly by the equinoxes. From the spring equinox to the summer solstice, day receives an addition to its length, and night, on the other hand, submits to a diminution; until the longest day and the shortest night are both completed. And then after the summer solstice the sun, turning back again the same road, neither more quickly nor more slowly than he advanced, but always preserving the same difference in the same manner, having a constantly equal arrangement, proceeds on till the autumnal equinox; and then, having made day and night both equal, it begins to increase the length of

the night, diminishing the day until the time of the winter solstice. And when it has made the night the longest night, and the day the shortest day, then returning back again and adopting the same distances as before, he again comes to the spring equinox.

Thus the differences of time which appear to be unequal, do in reality possess a perfect equality in respect of magnitude, not indeed at the same seasons, but at different seasons of the year.

XXX. And a very similar effect is seen in the different parts of animals and especially of men. For hand is equal to hand, and foot to foot, and nearly all the other limbs of the body are equal to their corresponding members in magnitude, those on the left hand being equal to those on the right. And there are an exceeding number of things which are equal to one another in power, both among wet things and dry things, the judgment on which is seen in measures and scales, and things of that kind. And nearly all things are equal as respects proportion, even all the little and all the great things in the whole world. For those who have examined the questions of natural philosophy with some accuracy say that the four elements are all equal in proportionate equality. And it is by proportion that the whole world is compounded together, and united, and endowed with consistency so as to remain firm for ever, proportion having distributed equality to each of its parts. And they say also that the four elements which are in us, dryness, and moisture, and cold, and heat have all been mixed together and well adapted by proportionate equality, and in fact that our whole composition is nothing but a mixture of the four powers combined together by an equality of proportion.

XXXI. But any one who examines all these things might add an interminable list of arguments and instances to this one present discussion. If he considered he would find the very smallest animals equal to the largest as to proportion; as for instance he would find the swallow equal to the eagle, the herring equal to the whale, and the ant equal to the elephant. For body and soul, and again pains and pleasures, and moreover affection for and dislike towards things, and all the other feelings which the nature of animals experience, are nearly all of them similar, being made equal by the rule of

any relaxation; but always remaining the same, made every single existing thing perfectly, according to its own excessive and consummate perfection, the Creator employing all numbers and all the ideas which tend to perfection.

XXXII. For, as Moses says, "He judged according to the little and according to the great,"* engendering and fashioning everything, and not taking anything away from the display of his art by reason of the obscurity of his materials, not adding anything because of their brilliancy; since all the artists who have any reputation wish to work up whatever materials they take in an admirable manner, whether they are costly or whether they are inexpensive. And before now, some persons, having even an extraordinary love of distinction, have even spent more skill in working up materials of little value, than they have devoted to those which are costly, wishing to make up for the deficiencies of the material by the additional display of their skill. But there is no material which has any value in the eyes of God, because he has given all materials an equal share of his skill. In reference to which it is said in the sacred scriptures, "God saw all that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."† But the things which receive an equal degree of praise, are by all means held in equal estimation by him who confers the praise; and what God praised was not the materials which he had worked up into creation, destitute of life and of melody, and easily dissolved, and

XXXIII. And if there is any one in the world who is a praiser of equality, that man is Moses. In the first place composing hymns in its honour, and in every place, and calling it the especial property of justice, as in fact its very name to some degree shows, to divide* bodies and things into two equal parts; and in the second place blaming injustice, the worker of the most disgraceful inequality; and inequality has been the parent of two wars, foreign and civil war, as on the other hand equality is the parent of peace. And he also utters the most manifest panegyric on justice, and the most undeniable reproach of injustice when he says, "You shall not commit injustice in any judgment, nor in measures, or weights, or balances: a just balance, and just weights, and a just heap, shall be yours."† And in Deuteronomy he says, "There shall not be a false weight in thy bag; thy weight shalt be true and just; there shall not be a little weight and a large one; that thy days may be multiplied upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, because every one who committeth injustice is an abomination to the Lord."‡

Therefore God, who loveth justice, hates and abominates injustice, the beginning of sedition and of evils; and in one passage the lawgiver represents equality as the muse of justice beginning with the creation of the entire heaven. For he says, "And God made a separation between the light and between the darkness, and he called the light day, and the darkness he called night."§ For it is equality which allotted night and day and light and darkness to existing things. It is equality also that divided the human race into man and woman, making two divisions, unequal in strength, but most perfectly equal for the purpose which nature had principally in view, the generation of a third human being like themselves. For, says Moses, "God made man; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.‖ He no longer says "him," but "them" in the plural number, adapting the species to the genus, which have, as I have already said, been divided with perfect equality.

XXXIV. And he apportioned cold and heat, and summer

* The Greek is δίχα τέμνειν, as if δικαιοσύνη, "justice," were derived from δίχα, "in two parts"

† Leviticus xix. 35.

‡ Deuteronomy xxv. 13.

§ Genesis i. 4.

‖ Genesis i. 26.

and spring, the different seasons of the year, divided by the same dividing Word. And the three days which passed before the creation of the sun, are equal in number to the three days of the first week which came after the creation of the sun, the number six being dissected equally in order to display the character of eternity and of time. For thus God allotted three days to eternity before the appearance of the sun, and those which came after the sun he allotted to time; the sun being an imitation of eternity, and time and eternity being the two primary powers of the living God; the one his beneficent power, in accordance with which he made the world, and in respect of which he is called God; the other his chastening power, according to which he rules and governs what he has created, in respect of which he is further denominated Lord, and these two he here states to be divided in the middle by him standing above them both. "For," says he, "I will speak to you from above the mercy-seat, in the midst, between the two cherubims;"* that he might show that the most ancient powers of the living God are equal; that is to say, his beneficent and his chastising power, being both divided by the same dividing Word.

XXXV. But what are the pillars of the ten generic laws which he calls tables? They are two; equal in number to the parts of the soul, the rational and irrational part, which must be instructed and corrected, being again divided by the Lawgiver; "for the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraven on the tables."† And, indeed, of the ten commandments engraved on these tables which are properly and especially laws, there is an equal division into two numbers of five; the first of which contains the principle of justice relating to God, and the second those relating to man.

Now of those principles of justice relating to God, the first law enunciated is one which opposes the polytheistic doctrine, and teaches us that the world is ruled over by one sole governor. The second is one forbidding men to make gods of things which are not the causes of anything, by means of the treacherous arts of painters and sculptors, whom Moses banished from his own constitution which he proposed to establish, condemning them to everlasting banishment, in

* Exodus xxv. 22. † Exodus xxxii. 16.

order that the only true God might be honoured in truth and simplicity. The third law is one about the name of the Lord, not about that name which has not yet reached his creatures; for that name is unspeakable, but about the name which is constantly applied to him as displayed in his powers; for it is commanded that we shall not take his name in vain. The fourth commandment is concerning the seventh day, always virgin, and without any mother, in order that creation, taking care that it may be always free from labour, may in this way come to a recollection of him who does everything without being seen.

The fifth commandment is about the honour due to parents. For this also is a sacred command; having reference not to men, but to him who is the cause of birth and existence to the universe, in accordance with whom it is that fathers and mothers appear to generate children; not generating them themselves, but only being the instruments of generation in his hands. And this command is placed, as it were, on the borders between the two tables of laws relating to God and those relating to man, and so it bounds the five which concern piety, and that five also which comprehend a prevention of injury to one's fellows. Since mortal parents are the boundaries of the immortal powers, which, generating everything according to nature, have permitted this lowest and mortal race to imitate their own powers of generation, and so to propagate its own seed; for God is the beginning of all generation, and the mortal species of mankind, being the lowest and least honoured of all, is the end.

The other table of five is the prohibition of adultery, of murder, of theft, of false witness, and of covetousness. These are generic rules, comprehending nearly all offences whatever, and to one of these rules each particular and special action is naturally referrible.

XXXVI. But you see also that the regularly occurring daily sacrifices are divided into equal portions; one portion being the sacrifice which the priests offer in their own behalf, consisting of the finest wheat-flour, and the other being that which they offer on behalf of the whole nation; consisting of two lambs, which they are especially commanded to offer.* For the law commands them to offer one half of the sacrifices above-

* Leviticus vi. 20.

mentioned early in the morning, and the other half at the time of the evening twilight, in order that God may receive his proper tribute of thanks for the blessings which are showered upon all men during the night.

You see also that the loaves which are placed upon the sacred table are divided by the twelve into equal parts, so as to be distributed to each company of six in number, and are so placed as a memorial of the tribes which are of a corresponding number; one half of whom, virtue, that is Leah, received as her share, having become the mother of six leaders of tribes; and the other half fell to the lot of Rachel's children and those of the other women.

You see also that the twelve stones of an emerald upon the garment which reached down to the priests' feet are divided equally on the right and on the left side of the garment; on which, being divided into equal numbers of six, the names of the twelve patriarchs of the tribes were engraved, being divine characters engraved on pillars, memorials of divine natures. What more need I say? Has he not also, taking two mountains symbolically to mean two races, and having again divided them on principles of the equality of proportion, allotted one to those who bless, and the other to those who curse; appointing leaders of tribes over each in order to give admonitions to those who have need of them, and to show them that the curses are equal in number to the blessings, and nearly, if it may be lawful to say so, of equal value? For the praises of the good and the reproaches of the wicked are of equal service, since to avoid evil and to choose good are, among all persons of sound sense, looked upon as one and the same thing.

XXXVII. A great impression is made upon me by the selection and division of the two goats which are brought as an offering for the purpose of atonement, and which are divided by an obscure and uncertain principle of division, namely, by lot. For of two principles, the one which is occupied about the affairs of divine virtue is consecrated and set apart to be offered to God; but that which devotes itself to the concerns of human unhappiness is appropriated to the banished creature, for the share which that has obtained the sacred scriptures call the scape-goat, since it is removed from its place, and pursued and driven away to a great distance from virtue.

And, as is the case with respect to good and unadulterated money, so also, as there are many things in nature, does not the invisible divider appear to you to divide them into equal portions, and to distribute the good money which has stood the test to the lover of instruction, and that which has not been properly coined, and which is bad, to the man who is ignorant? for, says Moses, "that which had no mark belonged to Laban, and that which was marked belonged to Jacob."* For the soul, being as some ancient writer has said, a waxen tablet, while it is hard and resisting, repels and refuses the impressions which are attempted to be stamped upon it; and remains of necessity undistinguished by any figure. But when it becomes tractable and yielding in a moderate degree, it then receives deep impressions, and having taken off the stamp given by the seal, it preserves accurately the appearances which are impressed upon it, so that they cannot be effaced

XXXVIII. Moreover, the equal division of the sacrifices of blood is certainly calculated to excite our admiration: which division the chief priest Moses, having nature for his teacher, made; for, says the scripture, "He, taking the half of the blood, poured it into the bowls; and the other half he poured out upon the altar."† In order to show that the sacred genus of wisdom is of a twofold nature, the one kind being divine, and the other human: and the divine kind is unmingled and unadulterated, on which account it sacrifices to the pure, and unalloyed, and only God existing in unity; but the human kind is of a mixed and alloyed nature, and therefore dissipates the unanimity and community of our mixed, and combined, and compound race, and effects any thing rather than a proper harmony of either melodies or morals.

But the unmixed and unadulterated portion of the soul is the pure mind, which, being inspired by heaven from above, when it is preserved in a state free from all disease and from all mishap is very suitably all poured forth and resolved into the elements of a sacred libation, and so restored in a fitting manner to God, who inspired it and preserved it free from any infliction of evil; but the mixed portion is entirely that of the outward senses, and for this part nature has made suitable

* Genesis xxx. 42. † Exodus xxiv. 6.

craters. Now, the craters of the sense of seeing are the eyes, those of hearing are the ears, those of smelling are the nostrils, and so on with the appropriate receptacles for each of the senses. On these craters the sacred word pours a portion of blood, thinking it right that the irrational part of us should become endowed with soul and vitality, and should in some manner become rational; following the guidance of admonition, and purifying itself from the deceitful alluring powers of the objects of the outward sense which aim to overcome it.

Was it not in the same manner that the holy double-drachm was divided?* That we should purify the half of it, namely, a drachm, offering it as the ransom for our souls: which the only free, the only delivering God, when addressed in the voice of supplication, and sometimes even without any supplication, by force delivers from the cruel and bitter despotism of the passions and iniquities; but the other portion we may leave to the race which is never free, but which is of a slavish disposition; of which class was the man who said, "I have loved my lord;"† that is to say, the mind which is the master in me; "and my wife," that is to say, the outward sense which is dear to him, and the housekeeper of his passions; "and my children," that is to say, the evils which are the offspring of them; "I will not depart free." For it is quite inevitable that such a description of persons as this must obtain a lot which is no lot, and that the scapegoat bought with the double drachm, must be given to them, which is just the opposite of the drachm and of unity which is offered up to God. And it is the nature of unity not to be capable of either addition or subtraction, inasmuch as it is the image of the only complete God; for all other things are intrinsically and by their own nature loose; and if there is any where any thing consolidated, that has been bound by the word of God, for this word is glue and a chain, filling all things with its essence. And the word, which connects together and fastens every thing, is peculiarly full itself of itself, having no need whatever of any thing beyond.

XXXIX. Very naturally therefore does Moses say, "He who is rich will not add anything, and he who is poor will not diminish anything of the half of the double drachm,"‡ which is,

* Exodus xxx. 13. † Exodus xxi. 5. ‡ Exodus xxx. 15.

as I have said before, a drachm, and a unit; to which every member might quote that line of the poet:

With thee I'll end, with thee I will begin.

For even an infinitely infinite number, being made of a continuation of other numbers, when dissolved must end in a unit: and again it must begin with a unit, being afterwards compounded so as to make an illimitable multitude; on which account those who have made the investigation of such matters their study, have not called the unit a number, but rather an element, and the beginning of number.

Again this heavenly food of the soul which Moses calls manna, the word of God divides in equal portions among all who are to use it; taking care of equality in an extraordinary degree. And Moses bears witness to this where he says, "He who had much had not too much, and he who had but little was in no want;"* since they all used that wonderful and most desirable measure of proportion. On which account it happened to the Israelites to learn that each of them was collecting not more for the men who were related to him than for the reasonings and manners which were akin to him. For as much as was sufficient for each man, that he was allotted in a prudent manner, so as neither to feel any want or any superfluity.

XL. And we may find something very much resembling this equality, according to analogy in the case of the festival which is called the passover; and the passover is when the soul is anxious to unlearn its subjection to the irrational passions, and willingly submits itself to a reasonable mastery over them. For it is expressly said, "If there be few that are in thy house, so as not to be sufficient in number for a sheep, then thou shalt take thy nearest neighbour in addition, according to the number of souls,"† so that each person may receive a sufficient share in proportion to the number of his family, being such as he is found to be worthy of and to have need of.

But when, as if it were some country, he wishes to divide out virtue among its inhabitants, he then allows the more numerous body to have more, and the less numerous to have less, thinking it reasonable not to allot a larger share to a

* Exodus xvi. 18. † Exodus xii. 16.

smaller number, nor a smaller share to a larger number; for in such a case they would neither of them be suited to their respective portions.

XLI. But the most manifest instance of equality in respect of number, is exhibited in the sacred offerings of the twelve princes, and again in the portions of those offerings which are distributed among the chiefs. For, says the scripture, "There shall be an equal share allotted to each of the sons of Aaron."* Equality is also very beautifully displayed in respect of the composition of spices for purposes of fumigation; for we read, "Take to thyself sweet odours, stacte, onycha, galbanum, these sweet spices with pure frankincense, all of the most chosen kinds, all of equal weight and thou shalt make of it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, a pure composition, a holy work."† For the Lord enjoins here that each of the separate portions shall be equal to each, with a view to the proper composition of the whole.

And as I imagine these four ingredients of which the entire perfume is composed are emblems of the four elements of which the whole world is made; he likens the stacte to water, the onycha to land, the galbanum to the air, and the pure transparent frankincense to fire; for stacte, which derives its name from the drops (σταγόνες) in which it falls is liquid, and onycha is dry and earth-like, the sweet smelling galbanum is added by way of giving a representation of the air, for there is fragrance in the air; and the transparency which there is in frankincense serves for a representation of fire. On which account also, he has separated the things which have weight from those which are light, uniting the one class by a closely connecting combination, and bringing forth the other in a disunited form; as where he says, "Take to thyself sweet odours, stacte, onycha," these things being weighty he mentions unconnectedly, being the symbols of earth and water. Afterwards he begins afresh with the other class, which he mentions in combination, saying, "And the sweet spice of galbanum and the transparent frankincense," these again being in their own nature emblems of the light things, air and fire.

And the harmonious composition and mixture of these things is truly his most ancient and most perfect holy work,

* Numbers vii. 5. † Exodus xxx. 34

namely, the world; which, speaking of it under the emblem of perfume, he thinks is bound to show gratitude to its Creator. So that in name the composition which has been carefully fabricated by the art of the apothecary may be offered up, but in real fact the whole world which was created by divine wisdom may be consecrated and dedicated, being made a burnt offering of early in the morning and also in the evening. For such a life as this becomes the world, namely, continually and without ceasing to be giving thanks to its Father and Creator, so as to stop short of nothing but evaporating and reducing itself into its original element, in order to show that it stores up and conceals nothing, but dedicates itself wholly as a pious offering to God who created it.

XLII. And I marvel also at that sacred word which runs on with zeal, in one continued course, without taking breath, "In order to stand in the midst between the dead and the living; and immediately," says Moses, "the plague was stayed."* But the evils which grind down and break to pieces and crush our souls were not likely either to be stayed or lightened, unless the reasoning, dear to God, had separated off the holy men who live in sincerity, from the unholy who in real truth are dead; for, owing to the mere fact of being near those who are sick, it has often happened that those who were in perfect health have caught their disease, and have been at the point of death: and it was impossible for them any longer to be exposed to this affliction if they once separated by a strong boundary fixed in the middle between them, which will preserve the better part by keeping off the inroads and attacks of the worse.

And I marvel still more, when listening to the sacred oracles I learn from them in what manner "a cloud came in the midst†" between the army of the Egyptians and the company of the children of Israel; for the cloud no longer permitted the race, which is temperate and beloved by God, to be persecuted by that which was devoted to the passions and a foe to God; being a covering and a protection to its friends, but a weapon of vengeance and chastisement against its enemies; for it gently showers down wisdom on the minds which study virtue—wisdom which cannot be visited by any evil. But on those minds which are ill-disposed and unpro-

* Numbers xvi. 48. † Exodus xiv. 19.

ductive of knowledge, it pours forth a whole body of punishments, bringing upon them the most pitiable destruction of the deluge.

And the Father who created the universe has given to his archangelic and most ancient Word a pre-eminent gift, to stand on the confines of both, and separated that which had been created from the Creator. And this same Word is continually a suppliant to the immortal God on behalf of the mortal race, which is exposed to affliction and misery; and is also the ambassador, sent by the Ruler of all, to the subject race. And the Word rejoices in the gift, and, exulting in it, announces it and boasts of it, saying, "And I stood in the midst, between the Lord and you;"* neither being uncreate as God, nor yet created as you, but being in the midst between these two extremities, like a hostage, as it were, to both parties: a hostage to the Creator, as a pledge and security that the whole race would never fly off and revolt entirely, choosing disorder rather than order; and to the creature, to lead it to entertain a confident hope that the merciful God would not overlook his own work. For I will proclaim peaceful intelligence to the creation from him who has determined to destroy wars, namely God, who is ever the guardian of peace.

XLIII. Therefore the sacred Word, having given us instruction respecting the division into equal parts, leads us also to the knowledge of opposites, saying that God placed the divisions "opposite to one another;"† for in fact nearly all the things that exist in the world, are by nature opposite to one another. And we must begin with the first.

Hot is opposite to cold, and dry to wet, and light to heavy, and darkness to light, and night to day; also in heaven that which is fixed is opposite to the wandering planetary motion, and in the air a clear sky is opposite to clouds, winter to summer, autumn to spring, for the one is blooming and the other fading. Again, of things on earth, sweet water is opposite to bitter, and barren to fertile land. Again, there are other things contrary to one another, as visible bodies to incorporeal, things endowed with vitality to things inanimate, rational to irrational, mortal to immortal, things discernible by the outward sense to things perceptible only by the intellect;

* Numbers xvi. 48. † Genesis xv. 10.

things comprehensible to things incomprehensible, elements to things concrete and perfected, beginning to end, generation to destruction, life to death, disease to health, white to black, the right to the left, justice to injustice, wisdom to folly, courage to cowardice, temperance to intemperance, virtue to vice; and all the species of one class to all the species of the other class.

Again, grammatical knowledge is contrary to ignorance of the same subject, musical science to unacquaintance with music, an educated to an illiterate condition; and, in short, skill in art to want of skill. Again, in the different arts there are vocal elements and mute elements, there are sharp and flat sounds, there are straight and circular lines. Once more, in animals and plants, there are some barren and some productive; some very prolific, others which yield but small increase; animals oviparous and animals viviparous; animals with soft skins, and others with hard shells; some wild and some tractable creatures; some fond of solitude, and others gregarious.

To go on further: poverty is opposite to wealth, glory to want of reputation, baseness of birth to nobility, want to abundance, war to peace, law to lawlessness, a bad to a good disposition, inactivity to labour, youth to old age, power to want of power, weakness to strength. And why need I enumerate every class separately, when these are unlimited and indescribable by reason of their multitude? Very beautifully, therefore, has the interpreter of the writings of nature, taking pity upon our idleness and want of consideration, taught every one of us in an invisible manner, as he does now, to arrange everything in such a way as to produce an exact opposition, not arranging them in wholes, but in equal divisions; for one thing consists of the two opposite parts; and when that one thing is bisected then the opposite parts are easily known. Is not this the thing which the Greeks say that Heraclitus, that great philosopher who is so celebrated among them, put forth as the leading principle of his whole philosophy, and boasted of it as if it were a new discovery? For it is in reality an ancient discovery of Moses, that out of the same thing opposite things are produced having the ratio of parts to the whole, as has here been shown.

XLVI. These matters then we will examine into accurately

on another occasion; but there is this other point also, which does not deserve to be passed over in silence. For the divisions into two equal parts which have been mentioned become six in number, since three animals were divided, so that the Word which divided them made up the number seven, dividing the two triads and establishing itself in the midst of them. And a thing very similar to this appears to me to be very clearly shown in the matter of the sacred candlestick; for that also was made having six branches, three on each side, and the main candlestick itself in the middle made the seventh, dividing and separating the two triads; for it is made of carved work, a divine work of exquisite skill and highly admired, being made of one solid piece of pure gold. For the unit, being one and single and pure, begot the number seven, which had no mother but is born of itself alone, without taking any additional material whatever to aid him.

But those who praise gold say a great many other things by way of panegyric on it, but dwell on two especial points as most particularly important and excellent; one that it does not receive poison, the other that it can be beaten out or melted out into the thinnest possible plates. while still remaining unbroken. Therefore it is very naturally taken as an emblem of that greater nature, which, being extended and diffused every where so as to penetrate in every direction, is wholly full of everything, and also connects all other things with the most admirable arrangement.

Concerning the candlestick above mentioned, the artist speaks again a second time and says, that from its different branches there are three arms projecting out on each side, equals in all respects to one another, and having on the top lamps like nuts, in the shape of flowers supporting the lights; * the seventh flower being fashioned on the top of the candlestick of solid gold, and having seven golden places for lights above them; so that in many accounts it has been believed to be fashioned in such a manner because the number six is divided into two triads by the Word, making the seventh and being placed in the midst of them; as indeed is the case now. For the entire candlestick with its six most entire and principal parts was made so as to consist of seven lamps, and seven flowers, and seven lights; and the six lights are divided by the seventh. And in like

* Exodus xxv. 33.

manner the flowers are divided by that which comes in the middle; and in the same manner also the lamps are divided by the seventh which comes in the middle. But the six branches, and the equal number of arms which shoot out are divided by the main trunk itself which makes up the number seven.

XLV. But the long discussion which some people start with respect to each of these, must be postponed to a subsequent opportunity. Thus much alone we must remind our readers of at this moment, that the sacred candlestick and the seven lights upon it are an imitation of the wandering of the seven planets through the heaven. How so? some one will say. Because, we will reply, in the same manner as the lights, so also does every one of the planets shed its rays. They therefore, being more brilliant, do transmit more brilliant beams to the earth, and brilliant beyond them all is he who is the centre one of the seven, the sun. And I call him the centre, not merely because he has the central position, as some have thought, but also because he has on many other accounts a right to be ministered unto and attended by the others accompanying him as body-guards on each side, by reason of his dignity and his magnitude, and the great benefits which he pours upon all earthly things.

But men, being unable completely to comprehend the arrangement of the planets (and in fact what other of the heavenly bodies can they understand with certainty and clearness?) speak according to their conjectures. And these persons appear to me to form the best conjectures on such subjects, who, having assigned the central position to the sun, say that there is an equal number of planets, namely, those above him and below him. Those above him being Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars; then comes the Sun himself, and next to him Mercury, Venus, and the Moon, which last is close to the air. The Creator therefore, wishing that there should be a model upon earth among us of the seven-lighted sphere as it exists in heaven, ordained this exquisite work to be made, namely, this candlestick. And its likeness to the soul is often pointed out too; for the soul is divisible into three parts, and each of the parts, as has been already pointed out, is divided into two more. And thus there being six divisions, the sacred and divine Word, the divider of them all, very naturally makes up the number seven.

XLVI. This other point also is too important to deserve to be passed over in silence: that, as there are three vessels

among the sacred furniture, a candlestick a bath, and an altar of incense; the altar of incense has reference to that gratitude which is exhibited for the bestowal of the elements, as has been shown before, since it does itself also receive a portion from these four, receiving wood from the earth, and the spices which are burnt from the water; for, being first of all liquefied, they are dissolved into drops of moisture, and vapour from the air, and form the fire the spark which kindles the whole; and the composition of frankincense, and galbanum, and onycha, and stacte, is a symbol of the four elements; and the table is referred to the gratitude which is displayed for the mortal things which are made out of the elements, for loaves and libations are placed upon it, which the creatures who stand in need of nourishment must of necessity use. And the candlestick has reference to the gratitude exhibited for all the things existing in heaven, in order that no portion of the world may lie under the imputation of ingratitude; but that we may see that every single part of it gives thanks, the elements, the things made of them, and not those only which are made on earth, but also those in heaven.

XLVII. And it is worth while to consider why, after having explained the measures of the table and of the altar of incense, he has given no such description of the candlestick; may it not be, perhaps, for the reason that the elements and all the mortal things which are compounded of them, of which the table and the altar of incense are symbols, have been measured, inasmuch as they are terminated in heaven? For that which surrounds anything is invariably the measure of that which is surrounded; but the heaven, of which the candlestick is the symbol, is of infinite magnitude; for it is indeed surrounded, but not, according to the account of Moses, by a vacuum, nor by any substance, nor by anything which is of equal magnitude with itself. nor by anything of unlimited size, in accordance with the marvellous fables which we touched upon when speaking of the building of the tower; but its boundary is God, and he also is its ruler and the director of its course.

As, therefore, the living God is incomprehensible, so also that which is bounded by him is not measured by any measures which come within the range of our intellect: and, perhaps, inasmuch as it is of circular form and skilfully

fashioned into a perfect sphere, it has no participation in either length or breadth.

XLVIII. Therefore, after he has said what is becoming on this subject, he proceeds to add, "But the birds he did not divide;"* meaning, by the term birds, the two reasonings which are winged and inclined by nature to soar to the investigation of sublime subjects; one of them being the archetypal pattern and above us, and the other being the copy of the former and abiding among us. And Moses calls the one which is above us the image of God, and the one which abides among us the impression of that image, "For," says he, "God made man," not an image, "but after the image."† So that the mind which is in each of us, which is in reality and truth the man, is a third image proceeding from the Creator. But the intermediate one is a model of the one and a copy of the other. But by nature our mind is indivisible; for the Creator, having divided the irrational part of the soul into six portions, has made six divisions of it, namely, sight, taste, hearing, smelling, touch, and voice; but the rational part, which is called the mind he has left undivided, according to the likeness of the entire heaven. For in this, also, there is is a report that the outermost sphere, which is destitute of motion, is preserved without being divided, but that the inner one is divided into six portions, and thus completes the seven circles of what are called the planets: for I imagine the heaven is in the world the same thing that the soul is in the human being. They say, therefore, that these two natures, full of reason and comprehension—that, I mean, which exists in man and that which exists in the world—are both at all times entire and indivisible.

On this account, therefore, it is that the scriptures tell us, "He did not divide the birds." For our own mind is here compared to a dove, since that is a creature which is tame and domesticated among us; and the turtle dove is compared to the model presented by the other, that is to say, by the mind of the world, the heaven; for the word of God is fond of retirement, and solitude, and privacy; not mixing itself up with the crowd of things which have been created and will be destroyed, but being at all times accustomed to roam on high, and being anxious to be an attendant only on the one supreme Being.

* Genesis xv. 10. † Genesis i. 27.

Therefore, the two natures are indivisible; the nature, I mean, of the reasoning power in us, and of the divine Word above us; but though they are indivisible themselves, they divide an innumerable multitude of other things. For it is the divine Word which divided and distributed every thing in nature; and it is our own mind which divides every thing and every body which it comprehends, by the exertion of its intellect in an infinite manner, into an infinite number of parts, and which, in fact, never ceases from dividing. And this happens by reason of its resemblance to the Creator and Father of the universe; for the divine nature, being unmingled, uncombined with any thing else, and most completely destitute of parts, has been to the whole world the cause of mixture, and combination, and of an infinite variety of parts: so that, very naturally, the two things which thus resemble each other, both the mind which is in us and that which is above us, being without parts and indivisible, will still be able in a powerful manner to divide and distribute all existing things.

XLIX. Therefore, after Moses has mentioned the facts of birds not being cut in two pieces or divided, he proceeds to say, "And the birds came down and descended upon the bodies which were divided;"* using indeed expressions which are synonymous, but still representing the variance which exists in the facts in a most visible manner to those who are able to see. For it is contrary to nature that birds should come down, when they have been given wings for the purpose of soaring on high. For, as the earth is the most appropriate place for land animals, and above all for reptiles, which do not endure even to crawl upon it, but seek caves and lurking places, avoiding the regions which are above, on account of their kindred with the things which are below; so, in the same manner, the air is the appropriate abode for the winged race, the element which is by nature light is the proper home for those creatures which are light by reason of their being feathered.

When, therefore, those creatures, whose nature it is to traverse the air and who ought to roam through the æther, descend and come down upon the land, they are unable to live a life according to their nature. On the other hand, Moses approves, in no ordinary degree, of whatever reptiles are able

* Genesis xv. 11.

to take a leap in an upward direction. At all events he says, "Ye shall eat of these winged reptiles which go upon four feet, and which have legs above their feet so as to be able by them to leap up from the ground."* But these reptiles are the emblems of souls, which like reptiles being rooted in the earthly body, when they are raised up, get strength to soar on high, taking the heaven in exchange for the earth, and immortality in exchange for destruction. We must, therefore, think that they are full of every description of misery, which, having been brought up in the air, and in the æther which is the purest of all things, have changed their abode (not being able to bear the satiety of divine things), and have descended to that mortal and evil district, the earth.

And there are innumerable imaginations concerning an innumerable variety of things which roam about upon it also; some voluntary, and some out of ignorance, which are in no respect different from winged creatures, and which Moses compares to the birds that come down. And of these imaginations those which take the upward course belong to the better class, since virtue, which conducts the mind towards heaven and the divine country, travels with them. But those which take the downward course belong to the worse class, since wickedness guides them and drags them in the contrary direction by force. And their very names do, to a great extent, show the opposite character of the places. For virtue (ἀρετή) has derived its name not only from the word (αἵρεσις) choice, but also from the fact of its being lifted up (παρὰ τὸ αἴρεσθαι), for it is lifted up (αἴρεται) and borne on high because it always loves heavenly things; but wickedness (κακία) is so called from its tendency to go downwards (ἀπὸ τοῦ κάτω κεχωρηκέναι), and also because it compels those who practise it to fall down to the bottom (καταπίπτειν).

Accordingly the thoughts of the soul which are at variance with one another, flying towards and descending upon the earth, both come down themselves and also throw the mind down too, mingling with bodies in a disgraceful degree, and with things which are perceptible by the outward senses, not discernible by the intellect, imperfect not entire, perishable and not living. For they mix themselves up not only with bodies, but also with the divisions of the bodies which have

* Leviticus xi. 21.

been divided in two parts. And it is quite impossible that things which have been divided in this way should ever again admit of adaptation and union; since the nerves of the spirit, which were the strongest natural bond in them, are cut in two.

L. Moreover, Moses introduces a very true opinion when he teaches us that justice and every virtue loves the soul, but that wickedness and every vice is attached to the body; and that what is friendly to the one is in every case of necessity hostile to the other, as is the case even now. For having figuratively represented the wars of the soul, he then introduces birds as eager to involve themselves with and to cling to the bodies, and to satiate themselves with the flesh, the inroads and attacks of which the virtuous man, desiring to check, is said to sit by them as if he were a sort of curator or overseer of them. For when his domestic affairs were thrown into confusion by domestic sedition, and when the armies of the enemy were proceeding against him, he collected a wise council and deliberated with respect to the adversaries; in order that if he could possibly do so, using persuasion he might both put an end to the foreign war, and also remove the domestic confusion; for it was desirable to disperse those enemies who were gathering over him like a cloud, and who were full of irreconcileable enmity to him; and equally so to re-establish with the other party the relations which had previously existed.

Now those who are irreconcilable and implacable enemies are set down thus; the follies and intemperances of the soul, cowardice and injustice, and all the other irrational appetites which are accustomed to be generated by luxuriant and impotent appetite, raising their heads high and becoming restiff, and preventing the mind from proceeding in its straight course; and very often throwing its whole system into confusion and beating it down.

But the attacks and conflicts of those powers which are not irreconcilable resemble the frequent effect of the discussions and quarrels about doctrines which arise among the Sophists. For inasmuch as they all labour for one end, namely the contemplation of the things of nature, they may be said to be friends; but inasmuch as they do not agree in their particular investigations they may be said to be in a state of domestic sedition; as, for instance, those who affirm the universe to be uncreated

are at variance with those who insist upon its creation; and again those who urge that it will be destroyed are at strife with those who affirm that it is indeed perishable by nature but that it never will be destroyed, because it is held together by a more powerful chain, the will of the Creator. And again, those who affirm that there is nothing self-existent, but that everything has been created, are at variance with those who are of a contrary opinion. Those too, who say that man is he measure of all things, differ from those who would restrain the judicial faculties of the outward senses and of the intellect. And, in short, to sum up all these differences in a few words, those who represent everything as incomprehensible are at variance with those who say that a great number of things are properly understood.

And the sun, and the moon, and the whole heaven, and the earth, and the air, and the water, and all the things that are connected with them, afford subject for strife and contention to those who are fond of examining into such subjects, and who investigate their essences, and distinctive qualities, and changes, and alterations, and moreover their origin and the method of their destruction; and making no superficial investigation into the magnitude and motion of the heavenly bodies, they adopt all sorts of different opinions, never agreeing together, until some man, who is at the same time skilful at disentangling controversies and calculated to judge, takes his seat on the tribunal, and comes to a clear perception of the progeny of each individual's soul, and discards those which do not deserve to be maintained, and preserves those which are good, and which he pronounces worthy of suitable providential care. And all the controversies of philosophy are full of disagreement, since the truth escapes the intellect which is given to plausibilities and conjectures: for it is the very difficulty of discovering and seizing hold of the nature of truth that, in my opinion, has given rise to so many quarrels.

LI. "And about the setting of the sun a trance fell upon Abraham, and, behold, fear with great darkness fell upon him."* Now there is one kind of trance which is a sort of frantic delirium, causing infirmity of mind, either through old age, or melancholy, or some other similar cause. There is another kind which is excessive consternation, arising usually from

* Genesis xv. 12.

things which happen suddenly and unexpectedly. Another kind is mere tranquillity of the mind, arising when it is inclined by nature to be quiet: but that which is the best description of all is a divinely inspired and more vehement sort of enthusiasm, which the race of prophets is subject to.

Now the first kind Moses mentions in the curses which are recorded in Deuteronomy: for he says that, "delirium and blindness, and aberration of mind shall seize on the impious,"* so that they shall differ in no respect from blind persons at mid-day, being like people feeling their way in deep darkness. The second kind he mentions in many places; for he says, "And Isaac was astonished with a great astonishment, and said, Who, then, is it who went out to hunt for game for me, and who brought it to me? And I ate of it all before you come, and I have blessed him; yea, and he shall be blessed."† And, again, with reference to Jacob, who disbelieved those who told him that "Joseph is alive, and is ruler over the whole land of Egypt; for he," says the scripture, "was amazed in his mind, for he believed them not."‡ And, again, in Exodus, in the assembly of the people, we read: "For the whole of the mountain of Sinai was enveloped in smoke, because God descended upon it in fire. And the smoke went up as the vapour of a furnace, and the whole people was greatly astonished."§ Also, in Leviticus, when speaking of the consecration of the priests on the eighth day, when fire came out from heaven and licked up what was on the altar, and the burnt-offerings and the fat, the historian proceeds immediately to tell us, "And the whole people saw it and were astonished, and fell upon their faces;"‖ for such astonishment as this causes alarm and consternation.

And ought we not especially to wonder in the case of Esau, that he who was skilful in hunting was nevertheless himself continually caught and supplanted, having acquired his skill to his own injury and not to his advantage, and that he never used any great care to catch anything in his hunts? And also in the case of Jacob, that he hunts without having acquired any skill by learning, but only as he is moved by nature; and that he brings what he has caught to the examiner, who will distinguish whether it deserves to be approved; on which account

* Deut. xxviii. 28. † Genesis xxvii. 33. ‡ Genesis xlv. 26.
§ Exodus xix. 18. ‖ Leviticus ix. 24.

he "eateth of it all."* For everything that relates to meditation is wholesome food, whether it be investigation, or consideration, or hearing, or reading, or prayer, or self-restraint, or a contempt for things indifferent: and he ate, as I imagine, the first fruits of them all, but he did not eat the whole of all; for some appropriate food must be left for him who meditates as a reward for his pains. And the words, "before you came," are added out of regard for the nature of the thing; for if passion enters into the soul, we shall not enjoy temperance. And it convicts the worthless man as slow, and hesitating, and procrastinating, as to the works of instruction, but not as to those of intemperance. Therefore Egypt contains inspectors of works, who devote themselves with energy to securing the enjoyment of the passions. But Moses, on the other hand, commands the Israelites to eat the passover in haste, and to celebrate the migration from these passions in this way. And Judah says: "For if we had not delayed, we should by this time have returned, and have arrived again in Egypt; aye, and a second time should we have returned safe from thence."†

And very naturally did Jacob wonder whether the mind was still in the body; that is to say, whether Joseph was alive to virtue and ruling over the body, and not being ruled over by it. And any one who chooses to go through all the other instances, would be able to trace out the truth. But our present subject does not require any accurate discussion of these matters; on which account we had better return to the point from which we set out.

With respect to the third kind of trance, he philosophises in this manner when speaking of the creation of the woman; "For the Lord God," says Moses, "cast a trance upon Adam, and he slept."‡ Here calling the quietness and tranquillity of mind a trance; for the slumber of the mind is the awaking of the outward sense: and, again, the awaking of the intellect is the reducing of the outward senses to a state of inactivity

LII. An instance of the fourth kind of trance is the one which we are now considering: "And about the setting of the sun a trance fell upon Abraham," he being thrown into a state of enthusiasm and inspired by the Deity. But this is not the only thing which shows him to have been a prophet, but also the express words which are engraven in the sacred scriptures

* Genesis xxvii. 33. † Genesis xliii. 9. ‡ Genesis ii. 21.

as on a pillar. When some one endeavoured to separate Sarah, that is, the virtue which is derived from nature, from him, as if she had not been the peculiar property of the wise man alone, but had also belonged to every one who made any pretence to wisdom, God said, "Give the man back his wife, because he is a prophet, and he will pray for thee, and thou shalt live;"* and the sacred scriptures testify in the case of every good man, that he is a prophet; for a prophet says nothing of his own, but everything which he says is strange and prompted by some one else; and it is not lawful for a wicked man to be an interpreter of God, as also no wicked man can be properly said to be inspired; but this statement is only appropriate to the wise man alone, since he alone is a sounding instrument of God's voice, being struck and moved to sound in an invisible manner by him.

Accordingly, all those whom Moses describes as just persons he has also represented as inspired and prophesying. Noah was a just man; was he not also by that fact a prophet? or did he, without being possessed by any divine inspiration, utter those prayers and curses which he applied to the generations which should come hereafter, and all of which were eventually confirmed by the reality of the facts? Why should I speak of Isaac? Why of Jacob? For these also are manifestly found to have been prophets by many other circumstances, and especially by their addresses to their children. For the annunciation, "Assemble yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in the last days,"† was the expression of a man possessed by inspiration; for the knowledge of the future is not appropriate to, or natural to, man. What shall we say of Moses? is he not celebrated everywhere as a prophet? For the scripture says, "If there shall be among you a prophet of the Lord, I will make myself known unto him in a vision,"‡ but to Moses God appeared in his actual appearance and not by a riddle. And again we read, "There arose not any more any prophet like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."§ Very admirably, therefore, does the historian here point out, that Abraham was under the influence of inspiration when he says that, "About the setting of the sun a trance fell upon him."

* Genesis xx. 7.
† Genesis xlix. 2.
‡ *Numbers* xii. 6.
§ Deuteronomy xxxiv. 10.

LIII. And under the symbol of the sun he intimates our mind: for what reasoning is in us, that the sun is in the world. Since each of them gives light, the one casting a light which is perceptible by the outward senses, to shine upon the universe; and the other shedding their beams, discernible only by the intellect by means of our apprehensions, upon ourselves. As long therefore as our mind still shines around and hovers around, pouring as it were a noontide light into the whole soul, we, being masters of ourselves, are not possessed by any extraneous influence; but when it approaches its setting, then, as is natural, a trance, which proceeds from inspiration, takes violent hold of us, and madness seizes upon us, for when the divine light shines the human light sets, and when the divine light sets this other rises and shines, and this very frequently happens to the race of prophets; for the mind that is in us is removed from its place at the arrival of the divine Spirit, but is again restored to its previous habitation when that Spirit departs, for it is contrary to holy law for what is mortal to dwell with what is immortal.

On this account the setting of our reason, and the darkness which surrounds it, causes a trance and a heaven-inflicted madness. After that the historian connects with his preceding account what follows in consistency with it, saying, "And it was said to Abraham—for in real truth the prophet, even when he appears to be speaking, is silent, and another being is employing his vocal organs, his mouth and tongue, for the explanation of what things he chooses; and operating on these organs by some invisible and very skilful act, he makes them utter a sweet and harmonious sound, full of every kind of melody.

LIV. And it is well to hear what the things are which are thus said to have been predicted to Abraham. In the first place, that God does not grant to the man who loves virtue to dwell in the body as in his own native land, but only to sojourn in it as in a foreign country. "For knowing," says the scripture, "thou shalt know that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land which is not theirs."* But the district of the body is akin to every bad man, and in it he is desirous to abide as a dweller, not as a sojourner. Accordingly, these words contain this as one lesson; another is, that the things which bring

* Genesis xv. 13

slavery and disaster and bitter humiliation, as the prophet himself tells us, upon the soul are the dwellings upon earth. For the affections of the body are truly spurious and foreign, being produced by the flesh, in which they are rooted. And this slavery lasts four hundred years in accordance with the powers of the four passions.

For when pleasure rules, the mind is elated and puffed up, being carried away by empty vanity. Again, when appetite gets the upper hand, a desire for absent things is engendered, which suspends the mind upon unaccomplished hopes, as if in a halter; for then the mind is always thirsting and yet is unable to drink, enduring the punishment of Tantalus. Again, when under the influence of grief, the mind is tortured and contracted, like trees the leaves of which are falling off and withering; for all its flourishing and nutritious particles are dried up. Also, when fire obtains the supremacy, no one any longer chooses to remain, but betakes to flight and running away, thinking that that is the only way in which he can be saved. For appetite, having an attractive power even if the object which is desired retreats, compels one to pursue it; and fear, on the other hand, causing alienation, separates one from it, and makes one remove to a distance from what is presented to one's view.

LV. But the supremacy of these different passions before mentioned inflicts terrible slavery on those who are ruled over by them, until God, the umpire and judge of all things, separates that which is ill treated from that which is inflicting ill treatment, and delivers the former and blesses it with perfect freedom, and inflicts upon the other a retribution for the wickedness which it has committed. For we read in the next verse, "And the nation to which they shall be slaves I will judge, and after that they shall go forth with great substance."* For it is inevitable that a mortal man must obey the nature of the passions, and that a man who has been born must endure the fate which is allotted to him as appropriate; but it is the will of God to lighten the evils which are planted contemporaneously with our birth. So that even if we at th beginning suffer such evils as are properly assigned to us, become slaves of cruel masters, and if God also performs what is his peculiar work, proclaiming emancipation and freedom to

* Genesis xv. 14.

the souls which address their supplications to him, then he not only gives men a release from their bondage and a means of departure from their prison all guarded round as it is, but he also gives them the means of travelling, which he here calls substance.

And what is this? When the mind having come down from above from heaven becomes entangled in the necessities of the body, then, although it is not allured by any of these, still, like a eunuch or impotent person, it embraces pleasant evils. But if it remains in its own nature, then, being truly a man, it resists and discards them instead of being overthrown by them, being initiated in all the parts of complete encyclical learning; from which it derives a desire for contemplation, and acquires temperance and patience, very vigorous virtues, leaving its former abode, and finding a means of return back to its own country, and bringing with it all the lessons of instruction, which are here called supplies for the journey.

LVI. Having said thus much on these subjects, the historian proceeds: "And thou shalt depart to thy fathers, having lived in peace, in a good old age."* Therefore we, who are imperfect, are made war upon, and we become slaves, and only with difficulty do we find any relief from the dangers which impend over us. But the perfect race, exempt from slavery and free from the perils of war, is bred up in peace and the firmest freedom. And there is a particular lesson to be learnt from his representing the good man not as dying but departing, in order to show that the race of the soul, which is completely purified, cannot be extinguished and cannot die, but only departs in the way of migration from this earth to heaven, not undergoing that dissolution and destruction which death appears to bring with it And after the words, "Thou shalt depart," he adds, "to thy fathers. It is here worth while to consider what kind of fathers is meant; for God can never mean those who had passed their lives in the country of the Chaldeans, among whom alone he had lived as being his relations, because he had been commanded by a sacred oracle to depart from those who were his kinsmen by blood.

For, says the historian, "The Lord said unto Abraham, Depart from out of thy land, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, to a land which I will show thee; and I will

* Genesis xv. 15.

make thee into a great nation."* For how can it be reasonable for him who was once been removed from his abode by the interference of Divine Providence, to return and dwell again in the same place? And how could it be reasonable for one who was about to be the leader of a new nation and of another race to be again assigned to his ancient one? For God would never have given to him a new character, and a new nation and family, if he had not wholly and entirely separated him from his ancient one. For that man is truly a chief of a nation and ruler of a family, from whom, as from a root, sprang that branch so fond of investigating and contemplating the affairs of our nature, by name Israel, since an express command has been given "to remove the old things from before the face of those which are new."‡ For where is any longer the use of investigations into antiquity, and ancient, and long-established customs, to those in whom on a sudden, when they have no such expectation, God rains all kinds of new blessings in a mass?

LVII. Therefore, when he says "fathers," he means not those whose souls have departed from them, and who are buried in the tombs of the land of Chaldea; but, as some say, the sun, and the moon, and the other stars: for some affirm that it is owing to these bodies that the nature of all the things in the world has its existence. But as some other persons think he means the archetypal ideas, those models of these things which are perceptible by the outward senses and visible; which models, however, are only perceptible by the intellect and invisible; and that it is to these that the mind of the wise man emigrates. Some, again, have fancied that by "fathers," are here meant the four principles and powers of which the world is composed—the earth, the water, the air, and the fire; for they say, that all created things are very properly dissolved into these elements. For as nouns, and verbs, and all the other parts of speech, consist of the elements of grammar, and again are resolvable into these ultimate principles, so, in the same manner, each individual among us, being compounded of the four elements, and borrowing small portions from each essence, does, at certain fixed periods, repay what he has borrowed, giving what he has dry to the earth,

* Genesis xii. 1. † Leviticus xxvi. 10

what moisture he has to the water, what heat he has to the fire, and what cold he has to the air.

These then are the things of the body; but the intellectual and heavenly race of the soul will ascend to the purest æther as to its father. For the fifth essence, as the account of the ancients tells us, may be a certain one, which brings things round in a cycle, differing from the other four as being superior to them, from which the stars and the whole heavens appear to be generated, and of which, as a natural consequence, one must lay it down that the human soul is a fragment.

LVIII. And the expression, "After having lived in peace," is used with much propriety; because nearly all or the greater portion of the human race lives rather in war and among all the evils of war. And of wars, one kind proceeds from external enemies, and is brought on by want of reputation, and by lowness of origin, and by other things of that kind. But another kind arises from one's domestic enemies; some about the body, such as weaknesses, stains, all kinds of mutilations, and a whole body of other unspeakable evils; and others affecting the soul, such as passions, diseases, infirmities, terrible and most grievous inflictions, and incurable calamities arising from folly and injustice, and other similar evils.

Therefore he speaks of him who has lived in peace, who has enjoyed a serene and tranquil life, as a man truly happy and blessed. When then shall this happen? When all external things prosper with me, in such a way as to tend to my abundance and to my glory. When the things relating to the body are in a favourable state, so as to give me good health and strength; and when the things relating to my soul are in a similar state, so as to enable it to enjoy the virtues. For each of these requires its own appropriate body-guards. Now the body is attended in that capacity by glory, and abundance, and a sufficient provision of wealth; and the soul by the wholeness, and soundness, and thoroughly healthy state of the body; and the mind by those speculations which are concerned about the sciences.

Since it is plain to all those who are versed in the holy scriptures, that when peace is here mentioned, it is not that peace which cities enjoy. For Abraham bore a part in many terrible wars, out of which he appears to have come triumphantly. And indeed the being forced to depart from his

native country, and to leave his home, and his inability to dwell in his native city, and his being driven hither and thither, and wandering about by desolate and unfrequented roads, would have been a terrible war for one who had not put his trust in certain divine oracles and promises.

There was also a third calamity, of a formidable nature, also to be borne by him, a famine, worse than the departure from his home, or than all the evils of war. What peace then did he enjoy? For I imagine to be driven from his former home, and to have no settled abode, and to be unable to make any effectual resistance to very powerful monarchs, and to be oppressed with hunger, seem like indications, not of one war, but of many wars of various kinds. But, according to those interpretations which are figurative, every one of these events is an instance and proof of unalloyed peace. For an absence of the passions, and a complete scarcity of them, and the destruction of inimical acts of iniquity, and a departure from the opinions of the Chaldæans to the doctrine which loves God, that is to say, from the created being, perceptible by the outward senses, to the great Cause and Creator of all things, who is appreciable only by the intellect, are things which supply a good system of laws and stability.

And God promises the man who enjoys such a peace as this a glorious old age, not indeed one which shall last an exceeding time, but he promises him a life with wisdom. For tranquillity and happiness are better than length of years, in proportion as a short period of light is better than everlasting darkness. For well did one of the prophets say: "He had rather live one day in company with virtue, than ten thousand years in the shadow of death;"* under this figurative expression of shadow, intimating the life of the wicked. And Moses says the very same thing, intimating it by his actions rather than by his words. For the man who he says shall enjoy a glorious old age, he has at the same time represented as more short-lived than almost any one of those who preceded him. Speaking in a philosophical manner, and teaching us who it is who does truly enjoy a happy old age, that we may not conceive pride respecting old age from anything that affects the visible body, as such pride is full of shame and many disgraceful circumstances. But, that keeping our eyes fixed on wisdom of

* Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

counsel, and steadiness of soul, we may ascribe to such men and testify in their favour that they have a glorious old age, (γῆρας) akin to, and bearing nearly the same name as honour (γέρας). Listen, therefore, in such a spirit as to think his words a good lesson, to this statement of the lawgiver, that the good man alone has a happy old age, and that he is the most long-lived of men; but that the wicked man is the most short-lived of men, living only to die, or rather having already died as to the life of virtue.

LIX. In the next verses it is said, "And in the fourth generation they shall return hither," not merely in order that the time may be exactly marked out to him, in which his descendants shall become inhabitants of the holy land, but also in order to represent to him the perfect and complete re-establishment of virtue; and this takes place as it were in the fourth generation, but how it does so it is worth while to consider.

The child, after it is brought forth, during its age of infancy, till it has completed its first period of seven years, has a pure unmixed nature, very like a smooth waxen tablet, which has not yet been stamped with the indelible impressions of good or evil; for all the things which appear to be engraved upon it are soon confused and effaced by reason of its moisture: this is as it were the first age of the soul.

The second is that which, after the age of infancy is passed, begins to live among evils, some of which it is also accustomed to generate from itself, and others it cheerfully receives from other sources, for the teachers of evil deeds are infinite in number; nurses, and tutors, and parents, and the laws in different states, whether written or unwritten, which make objects of admiration out of things which ought to be laughed at; and even without teachers nature itself is easily inclined to learn what is improper, so as to be continually weighed down by the abundance of its evils; "For," says the scripture, "the mind of man is carefully devoted to evil from his youth."* This is that most accursed period which is figuratively called an age, but also especially the age of youth, in which the body is full of youthful vigour, and the soul is puffed up; the passions, which have hitherto lain hid, being now

* Genesis viii. 21.

fanned into a flame, and burning up the threshing-floors, and crops, and fields, and whatever they meet with.

This diseased generation or age must be remedied by some third age, acting towards it the part of medical philosophy, so that it shall be charmed with salutary and saving words, by means of which it will receive an evacuation of the immoderate satiety of evil actions, and a fulness of a sort of hungry emptiness, and terrible desolation of good deeds. Therefore, after the application of this cure, there comes first the age, in which power and vigour grow up in the soul, in accordance with the most certain comprehension of wisdom, and the undeviating and solid character which exists in all the virtues. This is the meaning of the expression, "And in the fourth generation they shall return hither." For according to the fourth number thus pointed out the soul, which has turned away from doing evil, is proclaimed as the inheritor of wisdom; for the first number is that into which it is not possible to receive any idea of either good or evil, since the soul is as yet destitute of all impressions; and the second is that in which we indulge in a rapid course of the passions; and the third is that in which we are healed, repelling the infections of disease, and at last ceasing to feel the evil vigour of the passions; the fourth is that in which we acquire complete and perfect health and vigour, when rejecting what is bad we appear to endeavour to apply to what is good, which previously was not in our power.

LX. But up to what time this is to be he tells us himself, when he says, "For the wickednesses of the Amorites are not yet fulfilled."* And such words as these give an occasion to weaker brethren to fancy, that Moses represents fate and necessity as the causes of all things that exist or take place: but we must not be ignorant that he was well acquainted with the consequences, and connection, and reciprocal dependence of the causes of things, inasmuch as he was a philosophical man, accustomed to converse with God: and he does not attribute the causes of things which exist, or which take place, to these powers; for he imagined to himself some other more ancient power, mounted upon the universe, like a charioteer, or like the pilot of a ship; for this power steers the whole common vessel of the world in which all things sail, and he bridles the

* Genesis xv. 11.

course of the winged chariot, the entire heaven, exerting an independent and absolute sovereign authority. What then are we to say about these subjects? The name Amorites, being interpreted, means "talkers;" and numbers of those who have received that greatest of all the blessings bestowed upon man by nature, namely speech, have abused and corrupted it, employing it ungratefully and treacherously, to the injury of her who has bestowed it. Such are flatterers, impostors, devisers of plausible sophistries, men who rather cultivate the skill to delude and to cheat, and who have no care to speak truly, and these men study indistinctness. Now indistinctness is equivalent to deep darkness in discourse; and darkness is the great assistant of robbers, on which account Moses has adorned the chief priest with distinct demonstration and truth; thinking it proper that the discourse of the virtuous man should be clear, and perspicuous, and true; but men in general pursue that which is indistinct and false, under the banner of which the whole misguided multitude of ordinary careless men enrols itself.

Therefore, as long as "the offences of the Amorites are not fulfilled," that is to say, the evils of sophistical arguments by reason of their not having been refuted, but while they still influence us, having an attractive power by reason of their plausibility, we being unable to turn away and forsake them, remain in their power from being allured by them. But if once all unreal plausibilities are convicted and refuted by true proofs, and if their offences are shown to be full and running over, then we shall flee away without ever turning back, and as it were slipping our cables we shall set sail from the region of falsehoods and sophistries, hastening to cast anchor in the safe harbours and havens of truth.

And in this way, I look upon it as sufficiently proved in the spirit of my original proposition that it is impossible for a man to reject, and to hate, and to forsake plausible falsehood, unless the evils arising from it are seen to be full and complete; and they will be shown to be so, by its being refuted in no superficial way, by the establishment on the other hand, and by the complete confirmation of truth.

LXI. In the next verse the historian proceeds to say, "and when the sun approached its setting, there was a flame;"*

* Genesis xv. 17.

showing that virtue is a thing which is not born till late, and indeed which, as some persons have said, is only confirmed and established at the very setting of life. And he compares virtue to a flame; for as the flame consumes whatever materials are exposed to it, and gives light to all the air in its neighbourhood, in the same manner does virtue burn up all the offences, and fills the whole mind with light. But while discourses, which are neither divided nor properly distributed, prevail over us by reason of their plausibilities, which he here calls the Amorites, we are not able to see the most brilliant and unshaded light. But we are like a furnace which has not a pure flame, but, as he himself says, emits only smoke, being gradually kindled by the sparks of knowledge, but not as yet being able to stand the hardening and test of pure fire.

But we owe great gratitude to him who has scattered those sparks, in order that our mind may not become cold like a lifeless corpse, but being warmed and vivified by the gentle increasing heat of virtue, may feel a glow until it receives the change to holy fire, like Nadab and Abihu. But smoke exists before fire, and compels those who come near it to weep; but both fire and smoke often come together. For, being delighted at the messengers of virtue, we hope to attain perfection therein, and if we are not yet able to arrive at it, then we can scarcely through our grief forbear from tears. For when an excessive desire is implanted in our breasts, they hasten to pursue the desired object, and our faces are full of chagrin until we attain it.

And how he has compared the soul of the man, who loves instruction and who cherishes a hope of arirving at perfection, to a furnace, because each is a vessel in which food is cooked, the one being the vessel in which those meats which are perishable are prepared, and the other that suited to the reception of the imperishable virtues.

And the burning torches of fire which are lighted up are the judgments of God who bears the torch, being bright and radiant, which are accustomed to be always placed in the middle between the divided portions; I mean by this the portions set in opposition to one another, of which the whole world is composed. For we read in the scripture, "The lamps of fire which were in the midst between the divided portions,"*

* Genesis xv. 17.

that you may know that the divine powers which go through the middle of both bodies and things, destroy none of them; for both the divisions remain unhurt, but only divide and discriminate in a most excellent manner between the natures of each.

LXII. Therefore, the wise man has now been sufficiently proved to be the inheritor of the knowledge of the subjects above mentioned. "For," says the historian, "on that day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, to thy seed will I give this land."* But what land does he mean but that which has been already mentioned, to which he is now making reference? The fruit of which is the safe and most certain comprehension of the wisdom of God, according to which it preserves for its dividers all the good things which exist without any admixture or taint of evil, as if they had been incorruptible from their very beginning. After this he proceeds to add, "from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates." Showing that those men who are perfect have their beginnings in the body, and the outward sense, and the organic parts, without which we cannot live, for they are useful for instruction in the life which is in union with the body; but they have their end with the wisdom of God, which is truly the great river, overflowing with joy, and cheerfulness, and all other blessings. For he has not described the country as reaching from the river Euphrates to the river of Egypt (for he would never have brought over virtue towards the passions of the body), but on the contrary, he has said from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. For the migrations are from mortal things to things incorruptible.

A TREATISE

ON THE

MEETING FOR THE SAKE OF SEEKING INSTRUCTION.

I. "But Sarah the wife of Abraham had not borne him any child. And she had an Egyptian handmaiden, whose name was Hagar. And Sarah said unto Abraham, Behold, the Lord

* Genesis xv. 18.

has closed me up, so that I should not bear children; go in unto my handmaiden that thou mayest have children by her."* The name Sarah, being interpreted, means "my princedom." And the wisdom which is in me, and the temperance which is in me, and the particular justice, and each of the other virtues which belong to me alone, are the princedom of me alone. For such virtue, being a queen from its birth, rules over and governs me who have determined on obeying it.

Now this virtue, Moses (making a most paradoxical assertion) reports, as being both barren and also most prolific, since he affirms that the most populous of all nations is sprung from it. For, in real truth, virtue is barren with respect to all things which are evil, but is so exceedingly prolific of good things, that it stands in no need of the art of the midwife, for it anticipates it by bringing forth before its arrival. Therefore animals and plants, after considerable intervals and interruptions, bring forth their appropriate fruits. once, or at most twice a year; according to the number of times which nature has appointed each of them, and which is properly adapted to the seasons of the year. But virtue without any interruption, without any interval or any cessation, is continually bringing forth at all times and on all occasions. not indeed children, but virtuous reasonings, and irreproachable counsels, and praiseworthy actions.

II. But neither is wealth, which it is not possible to employ, of any advantage to its possessors, nor is the fertility of wisdom of any service to us, unless it also brings forth such things as are serviceable to us. For some persons it judges to be in every respect worthy of living in its company; but others appear to have not yet arrived at such an age, as to be able to support so highly praised and well regulated a charge: whom, however, it permits to enter upon the preliminaries of marriage, holding out to them a hope that they may hereafter consummate the wedlock.

Sarah therefore, the virtue which rules over my soul, has brought forth, but, she has not brought forth for me (for I should never as yet have been able, since I am quite young, to receive her offspring); she has brought forth, I say, wisdom, and the doing of just actions, and piety, by reason of the multitude of illegitimate children whom the vain opinions

* Genesis xvi. 1.

have brought forth to me. For the education of the offspring, and the constant superintendence and incessant care which they require, have compelled me to neglect the legitimate children, who are really citizens. It is well, therefore, to pray that virtue may not only bring forth, since she is prolific even without a prayer, but that she also may bring for us; in order that we, receiving a share of her seed and of her offspring, may be happy. For she is accustomed to bring forth children to God alone, restoring with burning gratitude the first fruits of all the blessings which she has received, to him, who, as Moses says, "opened her womb," * which was at all times virgin. For he also says that the lamp, that archetypal model after which the copy is made, shines in one part, that is to say, in the part which is turned towards God.† For since that completes the number of seven, and stands in the middle of the six branches, which are divided into two lots of three each, acting as body-guards to it on either side, it sends its rays upwards toward that one being, namely God, thinking its light too brilliant for mortal sight to be able to stand its proximity.

III. On this account he does not say that Sarah did not bring forth at all, but only that she did not bring forth for him, for Abraham. For we are not as yet capable of becoming the fathers of the offspring of virtue, unless we first of all have a connection with her handmaiden; and the handmaiden of wisdom is the encyclical knowledge of music and logic, arrived at by previous instruction. For as in houses there are vestibules placed in front of staircases, and as in cities there are suburbs, through which one must pass in order to enter into the cities; so also the encyclical branches of instruction are placed in front of virtue, for they are the road which conducts to her. And as you must know that it is common for there to be great preludes to great propositions, and the greatest of all propositions is virtue, for it is conversant about the most important of all materials, namely, about the universal life of man; very naturally, therefore, that will not employ any short preface, but rather it will use as such, grammar, geometry, astronomy, rhetoric, music, and all the other sorts of contemplation which proceed in accordance with reason; of which Hagar, the handmaid of Sarah, is an emblem, as we will proceed to show.

* Genesis xxix. 31. † Exodus xxv. 31.

"For Sarah," says Moses, "said unto Abraham, Behold, the Lord has closed me up, so that I may not bear children. Go in unto my handmaiden, that thou mayest have children by her." Now, we must take out of the present discussion those conjunctions and connections of body with body which have pleasure for their end. For this is the connection of the mind with virtue, which is desirous to have children by her, and which, if it cannot do so at once, is at all events taught to espouse her handmaid, namely, intermediate instruction.

IV. And here it is worth while to admire wisdom, by reason of its modesty, which has not thought fit to reproach us with the slowness of our generation, or our absolute barrenness. And this, too, though the oracle says truly that she brought forth no child, not out of envy, but because of the unsuitableness of our own selves. For, says she, "The Lord has closed me up so, that I may not bear children." And she no longer adds the words, "to you," that she may not appear to mention the misfortunes of others, or to reproach them with theirs. "Therefore," says she, "go thou in to my handmaiden," that is to say, to the intermediate instruction of the intermediate and encyclical branches of knowledge, "that you may first have children by her;" for hereafter you shall be able to enjoy a connection with her mistress, tending to the procreation of legitimate children. For grammar, by teaching you the histories which are to be found in the works of the poets and historians, will give you intelligence and abundant learning; and, moreover, will teach you to look with contempt on all the vain fables which erroneous opinions invent, on account of the ill success which history tells us that the heroes and demigods who are celebrated among those writers, meet with.

And music will teach what is inharmonious in the way of rhythm, and what is ill arranged in harmony, and, rejecting all that is out of tune and all that is inconsistent with melody, will guide what was previously discordant to concord. And geometry, sowing the seeds of equality and just proportion in the soul, which is fond of learning, will, by means of the beauty of continued contemplation, implant in you an admiration of justice. And rhetoric, having sharpened the mind for contemplation in general, and having exercised and trained the faculties of speech in interpretation and explanation, will make man really rational, taking care of that peculiar and especial

duty which nature has bestowed upon it, but upon no other animal whatever. And dialectic science, which is the sister, the twin sister of rhetoric, as some persons have called it, separating true from false arguments, and refuting the plausibilities of sophistical arguments, will cure the great disease of the soul, deceit.

It is profitable, therefore, to abide among these and other sciences resembling them, and to devote one's especial attention to them. For perhaps, I say, as has happened to many, we shall become known to the queenly virtues by means of their subjects and handmaidens. Do you not see that our bodies do not use solid and costly food before they have first, in their age of infancy, used such as had no variety, and consisted merely of milk? And, in the same way, think also that infantine food is prepared for the soul, namely the encyclical sciences, and the contemplations which are directed to each of them; but that the more perfect and becoming food, namely the virtues, is prepared for those who are really full-grown men.

V. Now the first characteristics of the intermediate instruction are represented by two symbols, the race and the name. As to race, the handmaiden is an Egyptian, and her name is Hagar; and this name, being interpreted, means "emigration." For it follows of necessity that the man who delights in the encyclical contemplations, and who joins himself as a companion to varied learning, is as such enrolled under the banners of the earthly and Egyptian body; and that he stands in need of eyes in order to see and to read, and of ears in order to attend and to hear, and of his other external senses, in such a manner as to be able to unfold each of the objects of the external sense. For it is not natural to suppose that the subject of judgment can possibly be comprehended without some power which is to judge; and the power which judges of the objects of the external sense is the external sense, so that without the external sense it would not be possible for any thing in that world which is perceptible by the external sense to be accurately known, though those are the matters which are the principal field for philosophical speculation.

But the external sense, being that portion of the soul which most resembles the body, is deeply rooted in the entire vessel of the soul; and the vessel of the soul is, by a figurative way

of speaking, called Egypt. And there is this one characteristic derived from her race, which the handmaiden of virtue possesses. But what or what kind of characteristic that is which is derived from the name, we must now proceed to consider.

The intermediate instruction has the same rank and classification as a sojourner. For all knowledge, and wisdom, and virtue, are the only real native and original inhabitants and citizens of the universe. And all the other kinds of instruction, which obtain the second, and third, and lowest honours, are on the confines, between foreigners and citizens. For they are not connected with either race without some alloy, and yet again they are connected with both according to a certain community and participation. For they are sojourners from the fact of their passing their time among citizens; but from the fact of their not being settled inhabitants, they also resemble foreigners. In the same manner, according to my idea, as adopted children, inasmuch as they inherit the property of those who have adopted them, resemble real legitimate children; but inasmuch as they were not begotten by them, they resemble strangers. The same relation, then, that a mistress has to her handmaidens, or a wife, who is a cititzn, to a concubine, that same relation has virtue, that is Sarah, to education, that is Hagar. So that very naturally, since the husband, by name Abraham, is one who has an admiration for contemplation and knowledge; virtue, that is Sarah, would be his wife, and Hagar, that is all kinds of encylical accomplishment, would be his concubine. Whoever, therefore, has acquired wisdom from his teachers, would never reject Hagar. For the acquisition of all the preliminary branches of education is wholly necessary.

VI. But if any one, having determined on perseveringly enduring labours in the cause of virtue, devotes himself to continued study, practising and meditating without intermission, that man will marry two citizens, and also an equal number of concubines, the handmaidens of the citizens. And each of these has a different appearance and a differont nature. For instance, of the two citizen wives, one is a most healthy and well established and peaceful motion, whom from the *circumstances* the historians called Leah: and the other *resembles a whetstone and is* called Rachel, in the pursuit of

whom the mind, which is fond of labour and fond of exercises, is much sharpened and excited; and the name, being interpreted, means the "sight of profanation;" not because she sees profanely, but, on the contrary, because she thinks the things which are seen and which are the objects of the external senses, not brilliant but common and profane in comparison of the pure and untainted nature of those things which are invisible and which are only discernible by the intellect.

For since our soul is composed of two parts, and since the one contains the rational faculties, and the other the irrational ones, it follows that each part must have its own peculiar virtue, Leah being the virtue of the rational part, and Rachel of the irrational. For the one trains us, by means of the external senses and the parts of speech, to look contemptuously upon all things which it is proper to disregard, such as glory, and wealth, and pleasure, which the principal and general multitude of common men look upon as things to be admired and striven for, their sense of hearing being corrupted, and the tribunal of all the other external senses being corrupted likewise. But the other teaches us to turn away from that uneven and rough road which is never approached by souls that love virtue, and to go smoothly along the smooth road without any stumbling and without meeting any hindrances in the path. Therefore the handmaiden of the former of the two citizen wives will necessarily be the power of interpretation as exercised by means of the organs of speech, and also the rational invention of sophisms, deceiving man by a well-imagined plausibility; and its necessary nourishment is meat and drink.

The historian has recorded for us the names of the two handmaidens, calling them Zilpah and Billah.* The name Zilpah, being interpreted, means "a mouth going forth," a symbol of that nature which interprets and speaks. But Billah means "a swallowing," which is the first and most necessary support of all mortal animals. For it is by swallowing that our bodies are established firmly, and the cables of life are attached to this action as to a sure foundation. Accordingly the practiser of virtue lives with all the aforesaid powers, with some as with free women and citizens, and with others as slaves and concubines. For he is enamoured of the motion of Leah; and a smooth (λεία) motion existing in a body would

* Genesis xxx. 1.

be calculated to produce health, and, when existing in a soul, it would produce virtue and justice. But he loves Rachel, wrestling with his passions, and preparing himself for a struggle of temperance, arraying himself in opposition to all the objects of the external senses. For there are two kinds of advantage; either that according to which we enjoy blessings, as in peace, or else that which comes from arraying one's self in opposition to and from removing evils as in war. Now Leah is the wife according to whom it happens to the husband to enjoy the elder, and more important, and dominant blessings; and Rachel the wife, according to whom he obtains what resemble the sports of war. Such then is his way, if left with his citizen wives.

But the practiser of virtue also wants Billah, that is, swallowing, but as a slave and a concubine; for without food and vitality, living well could not possibly be the lot of the man, since things indifferent are always the foundation of what is better; and he also wants Zilpah, that is to say, interpretation by means of utterance, in order that the rational part itself may, in a twofold manner, contribute to perfection, both from the fountain existing in the intellect, and also from the stream flowing therefrom in the organ of the voice.

VII. But these men were husbands of many wives and concubines, not only of such as were citizens, as the sacred scriptures tell us. But Isaac had neither many wives nor any concubine at all, but only his first and wedded wife, who lived with him all his life. Why was this? Because the virtue acquired by teaching, which Abraham pursues, requires many things, both such as are legitimate according to prudence, and such also as are illegitimate according to the exegetical contemplations of preliminary instruction. And there is also a virtue which is made perfect by practice, to which Jacob appears to have been devoted; for exercises consist of many and various dogmas and doctrines, some leading and others following, some leading the way, and others arriving later, and bringing at one time more serious, and at other times lighter labours. But the self-instructed race, of which Isaac was a partaker, the excellent country of the mastery over the passions, has received as its share a nature simple, and unmixed, and unalloyed, standing in no need of either practice or *instruction in* which there is need of the concubine sciences,

and not only of the citizen wives; for when God has showered down from above that most requisite benefit of knowledge, self-taught, and having no need of a preceptor, it would be impossible any longer for a man to live with the slavish and concubine arts, having a desire for bastard doctrines as his children.

For the man who has arrived at this honour, is inscribed as the husband of the mistress and princess virtue; and she is called in the Greek language, perseverance, but among the Hebrews her name is Rebekkah. For he who, by reason of the happy constitution of his own nature and by the prolific fertility of his soul, has attained to wisdom without encountering labour or enduring hardship, stands in need of no further improvement; for he has at hand the perfect gifts of God, inspired by means of those most ancient graces, and he wishes and prays that they may remain lasting. In reference to which, it appears to me to be that the Author of all goodness gave him perseverance as his wife, in order that his mercies might endure for ever to the man who had her for his wife.

VIII. Now recollection only comes in the second rank after memory, as inferior to it; and he who recollects is inferior to him who remembers; for the latter resembles a man in an uninterrupted state of good health, but the other is like a man recovering from a disease, for forgetfulness is a disease of the memory; and it follows inevitably that the man who exerts his recollection has previously forgotten what he now recollects. Therefore the sacred scriptures call memory Ephraim, which name, being interpreted, means "fruit-bearing." But the Hebrews call recollection, after forgetfulness, Manasseh; for, in good truth, the soul of the man who remembers does bear as fruit the things which he has learned, losing nothing of them; but the soul of the man who exerts recollection, is only escaping from forgetfulness, by which it was detained before it recollected; therefore a citizen wife, memory, lives with the man who is endowed with remembrance. But the concubine recollection, a Syrian by birth, insolent and overbearing, lives with the man who forgets: for the meaning of the name Syria, is "sublimity;" and the son of the concubine recollection is Machir, as the Hebrews call him; but the Greeks interpret the name to mean "of the father." For those who recollect a thing think that the mind is the father and cause of their recollecting, and do not consider that this same en-

dowment of the mind did also before contain "forgetfulness," though it never would have received it if it had had memory in its power.

For it is said in the scripture, "And the sons of Manasseh were Ashriel whom she bare, but his concubine, the Aramitess, bare Machir; and Machir was the father of Gilead."* And Nachor, also, the brother of Abraham, had two wives, one a citizen and the other a concubine. And the name of the citizen was Milcah; and the name of the concubine was Rumah. But let no one who is in his senses suspect that the wise legislator recorded this as a historical genealogy, but it is rather an explanation of things which are able to benefit the soul by means of symbols. And when we have translated the names into our own language, we shall understand the real meanings intended to be conveyed by them. Come, then, let us now investigate each of them.

II. The name Nachor, being interpreted, means "a rest from light;" and Milcah means "princess;" and Rumah means "she who sees something." Therefore, to have light in the mind is good; but cessation from light, and tranquillity, and immobility is not perfect good, for it is advantageous to have evils tranquil, but it is desirable to have blessings in motion; for what advantage is there in a man's having a tuneful voice, if he keeps silent? or in his having the skill of a flute player, if he does not play the flute? or of his knowing the harp, if he does not strike it? or, in short, what good is there in any artist whatever, if he does not exercise his art? for theoretical knowledge, without putting it in practice, is of no advantage whatever to those who possess it. For a man, though skilful in the contest of the pancratium, or in boxing, or in wrestling, would derive no advantage from his athletic prowess if his hands were tied behind him; and he who was thoroughly practised in running would derive no advantage from his fleetness of foot if he were afflicted with the gout, or if he were to meet with any other injury to his feet. And the light of the soul, which is the most brilliant and the most like the sun, is knowledge; for as the eyes are lightened up by beams, so is the mind made brilliant by wisdom, and becomes gradually accustomed to see more acutely from being continually anointed with new speculations.

Therefore, Nachor is interpreted "a cessation from light,"

* 1 Chronicles vii. 14.

very naturally; for, inasmuch as he is a relation of the wise Abraham, he partakes of that light which is according to wisdom; but inasmuch as he did not join him in his emigration from the created to the uncreated being, from the world to the Creator of the world, he has acquired only a lame and imperfect knowledge, intermittent and delaying, or rather put together like a lifeless statue; for he does not depart and quit his abode in the Chaldæan country, that is to say, he does not separate himself from the speculations concerning astronomy; honouring that which is created rather than him who created it, and the world in preference to God; or rather, I should say, looking on the world itself as an absolute independent God, and not as the work of an absolute God.

X. And he takes Milcah for his wife, not being some queen who by the dispensations of fortune governs some nation of men, or some city, but only one who bears a common name, the same as here. For, just as a person would not be widely wrong who called the world, as being the most excellent of all created things, the king of the objects of the external sense; so, also, one may call the knowledge which is conversant about the heaven, which knowledge those who study astronomy and the Chaldæans possess in an eminent degree, the queen of all the sciences. This, therefore, is the wife who is a citizen; but the concubine is she who sees one only of all existing things at a time, even though it may be the most worthless of all. It is given, therefore, to the most excellent race to see the most excellent of things, namely, the really living God; for the name Israel, being interpreted, means "seeing God."

But to him who aims at the second prize, it is allowed to see that which is second best, namely, the heaven which is perceptible by the external senses, and the harmonious arrangement of the stars therein, and their truly musical and well-regulated motion. The third class are the sceptics, who do not apply themselves to the most excellent objects, either of the intellect or of the external senses, which exist in nature, because they are always occupying themselves with petty sophistries, and small cavils, and criticisms. These have for their companions the concubine Rumah, who sees something which is very minute, because they are unable to approach the investigation of better things, by means of which they might benefit their own life. For, as among physicians that which is called

theoretical medical skill, is a long way from doing any good to those that are sick—for diseases are cured by medicines, and by operations, and by regimen, and not by discussions or theories; so also in philosophy, there is a set of word-traffickers and word-eaters, who have neither the will nor the skill to heal a life which is full of infirmities, but who, from their very earliest infancy to the extremity of old age, are not ashamed to cavil, and quibble, and wrangle about figurative expressions, as if happiness consisted in an interminable and profitless minuteness of accuracy in the matter of nouns and verbs, and not in the improving and ameliorating the moral character, the true fountain of the persons' disposition; and in expelling the vices, and driving them out of its boundaries, and establishing the virtues as settlers within them.

XI. Now the wicked also have a desire for concubines, that is, for vain opinions and doctrines; accordingly Moses tells us that Thimna, the concubine of Eliphah the son of Esau, bore Amalek to Eliphah.* Alas, for the eminent ignobleness of the descendant! And you will see this ignobleness the more clearly, if you abandon the idea that this expression is used about a man, and rather consider the soul, with a kind of anatomical dissection. The historian then calls the irrational and immoderate desires and impetuosity of the passions, Amalek; now the name Amalek, being interpreted, means "the people looking up." For as the power of fire consumes the materials which are offered to it, so in the same manner does passion, when boiling over lick up and destroy everything with which it meets. And the father of this passion is very properly described as Eliphah; for this name, being interpreted, means "God has scattered me." But does it not follow that when God scatters, and disperses, and discards the soul, banishing it from himself, irrational passion is at once engendered? For He plants the mind which can really behold him, and which is really attached to God, the vine of a good kind, stretching out its roots so as to make them everlasting, and giving it abundance of fruit for the acquisition and enjoyment of the virtues. On which account Moses prays, saying, "Bring them in and plant them in,"† in order that those divine shoots may not be ephemeral, but long-lived and lasting for ever and ever.

And banishing the unjust and ungodly soul, he disperses it

* *Genesis* xxxvi. 12. † Exodus xv. 17.

and drives it to a distance from himself to the region of the pleasures and appetites and acts of injustice; and this region is, with exceeding appropriateness, called the region of the impious, more fitly than that one which is fabled as existing in the shades below. For indeed, the real hell is the life of the wicked, which is audacious, and flagitious, and liable to all kinds of curses.

XII. There is also in another place the following sentence deeply engraven: "When the Most High came down to scatter the nations, as he dispersed the sons of Adam,"* he drove out all earthly dispositions, which had no desire to see any good thing from heaven; depriving them of house and city, and rendering them truly wanderers on the face of the earth. For no house, nor city, nor anything else which relates to society and participation, is preserved for any one of the wicked; but they are deprived of all settled habitation, and dispersed abroad, being moved in every direction, and living a life of continued emigration, and not being able to become settled any where. Therefore the wicked man has for his children, wickedness, by his wife who is a citizen, and passion by his concubine; for the whole soul, like a free citizen, is a companion of reason, but that which is open to reproach brings forth wickedness. But the nature of the body is a concubine, by means of whom the birth of the passion is beheld; and the body is the region of the pleasures and passions, and it is called Thamnah, which name, being interpreted, signifies a "fluctuating abandonment" For the soul becomes faint and powerless by reason of the passions having received much tossing about and agitation from the body, on account of the violent storm which bursts forth from immoderate impetuosity.

But as the head is the chief of all the aforementioned parts of an animal, so is Esau the chief of this race, whose name is at one time interpreted "an oak," and at another, "a thing made." It is interpreted an oak, in reference to his being unbending, and implacable, and obstinate, and stiff-necked by nature, and having folly for his chief fellow counsellor, and being as such of a truly oaken character. And it is interpreted "a thing made," inasmuch as a life according to folly is an invention and a fable, full of tragic pomp and vain boasting; and, on the other hand, of mockery and comic ridicule, having in it nothing

* Deuteronomy xxxii. 8.

sound, being full of falsehood, having utterly cast off truth, and disregarding as a thing of no value, that nature which is void of distinctive qualities, or of particular species, but plain and sincere, which the practiser of virtue loves. And Moses bears witness to this, when he says that "Jacob was a man without artifice, dwelling in a house;"* so that he who is contrary to him, must necessarily be destitute of a house, the companion of invention, and of things made, and of fabulous nonsense, or rather bring himself a theatre and a fable.

XIII. The connection therefore between the reason which is devoted to contemplation and those powers which are citizen wives, or concubines, has here been explained to the best of my power. We must now proceed to investigate what follows, and endeavour to frame a proper connection for an argument. "Abraham," says the sacred historian, "listened to the voice of Sarah."† For it is necessary for him who is a learner to be obedient to the injunctions of virtue: but yet all men are not so obedient, but only those who are inspired with an exceedingly vehement love for knowledge. Since almost every day the places where there is anything to hear and the theatres are crowded, and those who study philosophy go on without ever stopping to take breath in one long continued discussion about virtue. But still what advantage is derived from all that is said? For men, instead of attending, turn their mind in other directions, some to marine and mercantile affairs, others to rents and agriculture; some to public honours and affairs of state, some to the gains to be derived from each different profession and art, others to revenging themselves upon their enemies, others again to the enjoyments to be derived from the indulgence of the amorous appetites, and in short every body is under the influence of some distracting idea or other: so that, as far as the subjects of the discussion are concerned, they are completely deaf, and are present with their bodies only, but are at a distance as to their minds, being in no particular different from images or statues. And if any persons do attend, they sit all that time only listening, and when they have departed they do not recollect a word of what has been said, but they have come in fact rather to be pleased through the medium of their hearing than with the view of deriving any solid advantage;

* *Genesis xxv. 27.* † Genesis xvi. 2.

so that their soul has not been able to comprehend anything or to become pregnant with any new idea, and even the cause which at first excited their pleasure soon ceases and their attention is extinguished.

There is a third kind of persons to whom what is said is for a time attended to and remembered, as if still sounding in their ears: but still they are found to be sophists rather than philosophers: of these men the language indeed is praiseworthy but the life is blameable; for they are powerful at speaking, but have no ability to do what is best. It is therefore hardly possible to find a man who is inclined to attend and endowed with a good memory, honouring deeds rather than words; as is testified to in the praise of the man fond of hearing in the the words, "He listened to the voice of Sarah." For he is not represented merely as hearing but also as listening to: and this last is a particularly felicitous expression to indicate one who approves of and is influenced by what he hears.

And the expression, "to the voice," is not inconsiderately or incorrectly used in preference to saying—he listened to Sarah speaking. For it is the especial character of a learner to listen to the voice and words of his teacher; for by these alone is he taught. But he who acquires what is good by practice, and solitary meditation, and not by instruction, does not attend to what is said but rather to those who say it, imitating the lives of those men in their actions which are in each particular irreproachable. For it is said, in the case of Jacob when he was sent away to form a marriage among his kinsmen, "Jacob listened to his mother and his father, and went into Mesopotamia."* He listened not to their voice, nor to their words, for it was fitting that he who was an imitator of their actions should be a practiser of virtue not a listener to speeches. For this is the peculiar character of one who is being taught, but the other is the mark of one who is enduring labours, in order that from this instance we may comprehend the difference between a practiser and a learner, the one being regulated with regard to him who is speaking, and the other wtih regard to his speech.

XIV. Therefore, continues the sacred historian, Sarah, the wife of Abraham, having taken Hagar, the Egyptian woman, her own handmaiden, ten years after Abraham had begun to

* Genesis xxviii. 7.

dwell in the land of Canaan, gave her to Abraham her "husband, to be his wife." * Wickedness is by nature an envious, and bitter, and evil-disposed thing, but virtue is gentle, and inclined to communion, and friendly; wishing in every possible manner to benefit those who are well disposed, either by its own power or by the means of others. So now accordingly, as we are not able to become the fathers of children by prudence, she espouses us to her own handmaiden, encyclical instruction, as I have said before, and all but endures to be the bridesmaid and manager of the marriage; for it is said that Sarah herself took this woman and gave her to her own husband.

And here it is worth while to raise the question why it is that now again Moses calls the wife of Abraham Sarah, when he had already repeatedly told us what her name was before; for he was not a writer who ever indulged in that worst description of prolixity, tautology. What, then, are we to say? Since she is about to betroth to him the handmaiden of wisdom, encyclical instruction, he says that she did not forget the duty which she owed to her mistress, but knew that she was, both in law and in her master's feelings, his wife, and that she herself was only such because of necessity and the force of opportunity. And this happens to every man who is fond of learning. And he who has experienced it may be looked upon as the most trustworthy witness to this fact. At all events I, when I was first excited by the stimulus of philosophy to feel a desire for it, when I was very young connected myself with one of her handmaidens, namely, grammar; and all the offspring of which I became the father by her, such as writing, reading, and the acquaintance with the works of the poets and historians, I attributed to the mistress. And at a subsequent time, forming connection with another of her handmaidens, geometry, and admiring her beauty (for she had beautiful symmetry and proportions in all her parts), I still appropriated none of the offspring, but carried them to the citizen wife, and bestowed them on her. I was desirous also to form a similar connection with a third, and she was full of good rhythm, well arranged, and well limbed, and was called music. And by her I became the parent of diatonic, and chromatic, and harmonic, and combined and separate melodies, and *all the different concords* belonging to fourths and to fifths,

* Genesis xvi. 3.

and to the diapason. And, again, I concealed none of all these things, in order that my legitimate citizen wife might become wealthy, being ministered unto by a multitude of ten thousand servants; for some men, being attracted by the charms of handmaidens, have neglected their true mistress, philosophy, and have grown old, some in poetry, and others in the study of painting, and others in the mixture of colours, and others in ten thousand other pursuits, without ever being able to return to the proper mistress; for each act has its own peculiar brilliancies, certain attractive powers, by which some persons are allured and overcome, forgetting all the covenants which they have made with philosophy; but he who abides by the agreements which he has made, provides every thing from all quarters with a view to pleasing her.

Very appropriately, therefore, does the sacred scripture, admiring his good faith in respect of his legitimate wife, say that even now Sarah was his true wife, inasmuch as he only took his handmaid into his bed out of complaisance towards her; and, indeed, in the same manner as the encyclical branches of education contribute to the proper comprehension of philosophy, so also does philosophy aid in the acquisition of wisdom; for philosophy is an attentive study of wisdom, and wisdom is the knowledge of all divine and human things, and of the respective causes of them. Therefore, just as encyclical accomplishments are the handmaidens of philosophy, so also is philosophy the handmaiden of wisdom; but philosophy teaches temperance with regard to the belly, and temperance with regard to the parts below the belly, and also temperance and restraint of the tongue. Now these qualities are said to be worthy of praise for their own sakes, but they would appear more respectable still if they were cultivated for the sake of doing honour to and giving pleasure to God.

We must, therefore, always remember the legitimate mistress when we are about to espouse her handmaidens; and let us be said indeed to be the husbands of the latter, but still let our legitimate mistress be our real wife, and not be merely called such.

XV. Again, she gives Hagar to him, not the first moment that he arrives in the country of the Canaanites, but after he has abode there ten years. And what the meaning of this statement is we must investigate in no careless manner.

Now, at the beginning of our existence, our soul dwelt among the passions alone as its foster-brethren, griefs, pains, fears, desires, and pleasures, which reach it through the medium of the external senses, before reason was as yet able to see good and evil, and to distinguish accurately the points wherein these things differ from one another, but while it was still wavering and hesitating, and as it were closing its eyes in profound sleeep; but as time advances, when advancing out of the age of infancy we are on the point of becoming young men, then, without any delay, the double trunk of virtue and wickedness springs forth out of one root, and we attain to a comprehension of them both, but still we by all means choose one of the two; those who are well disposed choosing virtue, and those of the contrary character choosing wickedness. These things, now, being previously sketched out in this manner, we must become aware that Egypt is the symbol of the passions and the land of the Canaanites, the emblem of the wickednesses; so that it is in strict accordance with natural probability that God, after having roused his people and made them depart from Egypt, leads them into the country of the Canaanites: for the man, as I have said before, at his very earliest birth had the Egyptian passions assigned him to dwell among, being deeply rooted in pleasures and in pains; and at a subsequent time he departs as if to found a colony, and migrates towards wickedness. His reason now being inclined to a more acute sight, and comprehending accurately both the opposite extremes of good and of evil, but nevertheless choosing the worse part, because it has a great share in mortal nature, to which what is evil is in some degree akin, as also the contrary, namely, good, is akin to the divine nature.

XVI. But these are the different countries of each respective nature; passions, that is to say, Egypt, being the country of the age of childhood; and wickedness, that is the land of Canaan, being the country of the age of youth. But the sacred scripture, although it is well acquainted with the different countries of the mortal race, suggests to us what ought to be done and what will be advantageous to us, enjoining us to hate the heathen, and their laws, and their customs, in that passage where he says, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the Lord your God; ye shall not behave according

to the customs of Egypt in which ye dwelt among them, and ye shall not walk in their laws. Ye shall do my judgments, and ye shall not do according to the customs of the land of Canaan, into which I am leading you to dwell there. And ye shall keep my commandments, and ye shall walk in them. I am the Lord your God. And ye shall keep all my commandments and my judgments, and ye shall do them. He that doeth them the same shall live in them. I am the Lord your God: and ye shall keep all my commandments and my judgments."*

Therefore, real true life, above everything else, consists in the judgments and commandments of God, so that the customs and practices of the impious must be death: but there are some races which take no note of passions and of wickednesses, from whom the multitudes of impious persons and wickedness are sprung.

Therefore, ten years after our departure to settle in the land of the Canaanites let us marry Hagar, since from the first moment that we become rational beings, we seek for ignorance and a deficiency of knowledge which is pernicious in its own nature; but at a subsequent period, and at a perfect number, namely, the legal number of the decade, we come to feel a desire for that instruction which is able to benefit us.

XVII. But the sons of the musicians have accurately and carefully investigated the question respecting the decade; and the most sacred Moses has composed a hymn, with no slight degree of skill, attributing the most excellent things to this number of the decade, such as prayers, first-fruits, the continual and unceasing offerings of the priests, the observance of the passover, the atonement,† the remission of debts, and the return to the ancient allotments of property at the end of every fifty years;‡ the preparation and furnishing of the indissoluble tabernacle,§ and ten thousand other things which it would take a long time to enumerate. However, we must not pass over the most important points.

In the first place he represents Noah to us (and this man is the first who is specially entitled just, in the holy scriptures), as the tenth in succession from him who was formed out of the earth, not intending by this statement to indicate the number

* Leviticus xviii. 1.
† Leviticus xxiii. 27.
‡ Leviticus xxv. 9.
§ Exodus xxvi. 1.

of years that had elapsed, but rather to show clearly that as the decade is the most perfect boundary and end of the numbers which proceed onwards from the unit, so also just in the soul is the perfection and true end of the actions of human life. For the number three when multiplied by itself so as to make nine, the oracles have pronounced to be the most warlike of numbers; but when one is added to it so as to complete the number ten, then they receive it as a friendly one. And as a proof of this, they allege the kingdoms of the nine kings,* (when the civil war was fanned into a flame, the four passions rising up against the five outward senses, and when the entire soul, like a city, was in danger of being subjected to an utter overthrow and destruction,) which the wise Abraham, appearing as the tenth king, put an end to, by joining in the warfare. He then caused a calm instead of a storm, and health instead of disease, and life, if one may speak the plain truth, instead of death, showing himself as the trophy-bearer of God who giveth the victory, to whom also he consecrated the tenths as a grateful offering on account of his victory.

Moreover, he also separates off the tenth of all the cattle which come "under the rod,"† I mean by this under instruction, and of all those which are of a tame and tractable sort, pronouncing them to be holy by an express provision of the law. In order that so, by many concurrent testimonies, we may learn the particular and especial appropriateness of the number ten to God, and of the number nine to our mortal race.

XVIII. But also it is expressly ordered, that men should offer as first fruits the tenths, not only of animals, but also of all the things which grow up out of the earth; "For," says the scripture, "every tenth of the earth from the seed and from the fruit of every tree, is holy to the Lord: and every tenth of oxen and sheep, and everything of any cattle which passes under the rod, of all these the tenth shall be holy to the Lord." You see that he thinks that it is proper to make an offering, by way of first fruits from the corporeal mass that is around us, which is really earthly and wooden; for life, and durability, and increase, and good health, fall to his share through the divine grace. You see also, that again an express command is given to offer first-fruits from all the irrational animals that are around ourselves; and by these are meant

* *Genesis xiv. 1.* † Leviticus xxvii. 32.

the outward senses. For to see, and to hear, and to smell, and to taste, and also to touch are divine gifts, for which it is our duty to give thanks.

But not only are we taught to thank the giver of all goodness for these earthly, and wooden, and corporeal things, and for the irrational animals, the outward senses, but also for the mind, which, to speak with strict propriety, is man in man, the better in the worse, the immortal in the mortal. On this account I think it is, that God ordered to be consecrated the whole of the first-born, the tenth, I mean the tribe of Levi, taking them in exchange for the first-born, for the preservation and protection of holiness, and piety, and sacred ministrations, which all have reference to the honour of God. For the first and best thing in ourselves is our reason, and it is very proper to offer up the first-fruits of our cleverness, and acuteness, and comprehension, and prudence, and of all our other faculties which we have in connection with our reason as first-fruits to God, who has bestowed upon us this great abundance of power of exerting our intelligence. From this consideration it was, that Jacob, the practiser of virtue, at the beginning of his prayers, says: "Of all that thou givest me, I will set apart and consecrate a tenth to thee."* And the sacred scripture, which was written after the prayers on occasion of victory, which Melchisedek, who had received a self-instructed and self-taught priesthood, makes, says: "For he gave him a tenth of all the things,"† assigning to him the outward senses the faculty of feeling properly, and by the sense of speech the faculty of speaking well, and by the senses connected with the mind the faculty of thinking well.

Very beautifully, therefore, and at the same time most unavoidably, does the sacred historian tell us in the fashion of an incidental narrative, when the memorial of that heavenly and divine food was consecrated in the golden urn, that "gomor was the tenth part of three measures."‡ For in us men there appear to be three measures, the outward senses, and speech, and mind. The outward sense being the measure of the objects of outward sense, speech being the measure of nouns and verbs, and of whatever is said; and the mind being the measure of those things which can only be perceived by the intellect. We must therefore offer first-fruits of each of these

* Genesis xxviii. 22. † Genesis xiv. 20. ‡ Exodus xvi. 36.

three measures as a sacred tenth, in order that our powers of speaking, and of feeling, and of comprehending, may be seen to be irreproachable and sound, in reference to and in connection with God. For this is the true and just measure, and the things that relate to ourselves are false and unjust measures.

XIX. Very appropriately, therefore, in the case of sacrifices also, the tenth part of the measure of fine wheat flour will be brought upon the altar, together with the victims. But the number of nine, which is what is left of the number ten, will remain among us. And the daily sacrifice of the priests corresponds also to these facts. For it is expressly commanded to them to offer every day the tenth part of an ephah *of fine wheat flour. For, passing over the ninth number, the god who was only discernible by the outward senses and by opinion, they learnt to worship the tenth, who is the only living and true God. For the world had nine portions assigned to it, eight in heaven, namely the portion of the fixed stars and the seven planets which are all borne forward in the same arrangement, and the ninth being the earth in conjunction with the air and water. For of these things there is only one bond and connection, though they admit all kinds of various changes and alterations. Therefore men in general have paid honours to these nine portions, and to the world which is compounded of them. But the perfect man honours only that being who is above the nine, and who is their creator, being the tenth portion, namely God. For having examined into the whole of his works, he has felt a love for the creator of them, and he has become anxious to be his suppliant and servant. On this account the priest offers up a tenth every day to the tenth, the only and everlasting God. This is, to speak properly, the spiritual passover of the soul, the passing over of all the passions and of every object of the outward senses to the tenth, which is the proper object of the intellect, and which is divine.

For it is said in the scripture: "On the tenth day of this month let each of them take a sheep according to his house;"† in order that from the tenth, there may be consecrated to the tenth, that is to God, the sacrifices which have been preserved in the soul, which is illuminated in two portions out of the three, until it is entirely changed in every part, and becomes a heavenly brilliancy like a full moon, at the height of its

* *Exodus x. 20.* † Exodus xii. 3.

increase at the end of the second week, and so is able not only to guard, but even to sacrifice uninjured and faultless improvements, that is to say, propitiations. For this propitiation also is established in the tenth day of the month, when the soul addresses its supplications to the tenth portion, namely to God, and has learnt, by its own sagacity and acuteness, the insignificance and nothingness of the creature, and also the excessive perfection and pre-eminent excellence in all good things of the uncreated God.

Therefore God becomes at once propitious, and propitious too, even without any supplications being addressed to him, to those who abase and humble themselves, and who are not puffed up with vain arrogance and self-opinion. This is remission and deliverance, this is complete freedom of the soul, shaking off the wanderings in which it wandered, and fleeing for a secure anchorage to the one nature which cannot wander, and which rises up to return to the lot which it formerly received when it had brilliant aspirations, and when it vigorously toiled in labours which had virtuous ends for their object. For then admiring it for its exertions, the holy scripture honoured it, giving it a most especial honour, an immortal inheritance, a place namely in the imperishable race. This is what the wise Abraham supplicates for, when that which in word indeed is the land of Sodom, but in real fact is the soul made barren of all good things and blinded as to its reason, is about to be burnt up, in order that if the memorial of justice, namely the tenth* part be found in it, it may obtain a sort of amnesty. Therefore he begins his supplication with a prayer for pardon, connected with the number fifty, and terminates with the number ten, the lowest number for whose deliverance he can dare to entreat.

XX. From which consideration it appears to me to have been, that Moses, after the appointment of chiliarchs, or commanders of thousands, and of centurians, and of captains of fifties,† thought proper to appoint captains of ten over all, in order that if the mind was not able to be improved by means of the elder orders, it might at least be purified by these last in order. And the son of the man who was devoted to learning, learnt a very beautiful doctrine when he went on that admirable embassy, asking in marriage for the self-taught wise man that

* Genesis xviii. 32. † Exodus xviii. 25.

most appropriate sister, namely, perseverance. For he takes ten camels,* a reminding of the number ten, that is to say, of right instruction, from among many and, indeed, infinite memorials of the Lord. He also takes of his good things, evidently not silver, nor any gold, nor any other of those things which consist of perishable materials; for Moses never gave the favourable appellation of good to any of these things, but those genuine good things which are the only good things of the soul; and those he appropriates for the use of his journey, and for his purposes of traffic, namely, instruction, improvement, study, desire, admiration, enthusiasm, prophecy, and the love of doing good actions; to which objects, a man who devotes all his care, and who practises the actions calculated to ensure their attainment, when he is about, as it were, to anchor in a safe harbour after having been tossed in a stormy sea, will take two earrings, each of a drachm in weight, and two golden armlets of ten shekels weight of gold for the arms of her who is sought in marriage.† Oh the divine ornament! We may understand that the drachm means the faculty of hearing, and the unbroken unit, and the attractive nature; for it is not becoming for hearing to have leisure to attend to anything except to that speech alone which sets forth in a suitable manner the virtues of the one and only God. And the ten shekels weight of gold mean attempts at works; for the actions, in accordance with wisdom, are established in perfect numbers, and every one of them is more precious than gold.

XXI. Something of this kind, now, is the contribution made by the princes, selected and appointed with reference to worth and merit, which they made when the soul being properly prepared and adorned by philosophy, was celebrating the festival of the dedication in a sacred and becoming manner, giving thanks to God its teacher and its guide; for it "offers up a censer full of frankincense, ten golden shekels in weight,"‡ in order that the wise man alone may judge of the odours which are exhaled by prudence and by every virtue. But when they appear to be made propitious, then Moses will sing a sacred hymn over them, saying, "The Lord has smelt the smell of a sweet savour," using the word to smell here as equivalent to approving of; for God is not

* *Genesis xxiv. 10.* † *Genesis* xxiv. 22. ‡ Numbers vii. 14.

formed like a man, nor has he any need of nostrils, or of any other organic parts. But as he proceeds onwards he speaks alsoo f the divine abode, the tabernacle, and its ten curtains;"* for, in fact, the compound edifice of entire wisdom has been assigned the perfect number, the number ten.

And wisdom is the court and palace of the all governing and only absolute and independent king. Accordingly, this is his abode, discernible only by the intellect; but the world is perceptible by the outward senses; since Moses made the curtains of such things as are symbols of the four elements, for they were made of fine flax, and of hyacinthine colour, and of purple, and of scarlet,—four numbers, as I have said before. Now the fine flax is an emblem of the earth, for the flax grows out of the earth; and the hyacinthine colour is a symbol of the air, for it is black by nature; purple (πορφύρα), again, is a symbol of the water; for the cause of this dye is derived from the sea, being the shell-fish of the same name (ἡ πορφύρα); and scarlet is a symbol of fire, for it most nearly resembles a flame.

Again, that omnipotent overseer and ruler of the universe reproved the state of Egypt, when rebellious against the rein, when it was extolling with grandiloquent words the mind as an adversary of God, and bestowing on it all the ensigns of kingly authority, such as the throne, the sceptre, the diadem; and chastised it with ten stripes and severe punishment. And in the same manner, also, he promises the wise Abraham that he will work for him the overthrow and complete destruction of ten nations † exactly, neither more nor less, and that he will give the country of those who are thus destroyed to his descendants; in every instance choosing to employ the number ten, both for praise and for blame, and also for honour and for punishment. And yet why do we mention these things? For what is more important than this is the fact, that Moses gave laws to that sacred and divine assembly in a code of ten commandments in all. And these are the commandments which are the generic heads, and roots, and principles of the infinite multitude of particular laws; being the everlasting source of all commands, and containing every imaginable injunction and prohibition to the great advantage of those who use them.

XXII. Very naturally, therefore, is the connection of Abraham with Hagar, placed at the end of ten years after his

* Exodus xxvi. 1. † Deuteronomy vii. 1.

arrival in the land of the Chaldæans. For it does not follow that the first moment that we become endowed with reason, while our intellect is still in a somewhat fluid state, we are able at once to derive encyclical instruction. But when we have attained to intelligence and acuteness of comprehension, then we no longer have a light and superficial mind, but rather a firm and solid intellect which we can exercise on every subject. And it is for this reason that the expression which follows is added, in connection with the former statement, "And he went in unto Hagar." For it was becoming for the scholar to go to his teacher, who was a man of learning, in order to learn such branches of instruction as are suited to the nature of man. For now, also, the pupil is represented as going to the place where he may obtain learning; but learning very often anticipates him and runs forward to meet him, having driven out envy from her habitation, and she attracts those towards her who are well inclined to her. Accordingly, one may read that virtue, that is Leah, went forward to meet the practiser of virtue, and said unto him, "To-day you shall come in to me,"* when he was returning from the fields. For where was the man who had the care of the seeds and plants of knowledge found to come, except to that virtue which he himself had cultivated?

XXIII. But there are times when virtue, as if making experiment of those who come to her as pupils, to see how much eagerness and earnestness they have, does not come forward to meet them, but veiling her face like Tamar, sits down in the public road, giving room to those who are travelling along the road to look upon her as a harlot, in order that those who are over curious on the subject may take off her veil and disclose her features, and may behold the untouched, and unpolluted, and most exquisite, and truly virgin beauty of modesty and chastity. Who then is he who is fond of investigating, and desirous of learning, and who thinks it not right to leave any of those things which are disguised or concealed unconsidered and unexamined? Who is he, I say, but the chief captain and king, he who abides by and rejoices in the agreements which he has made with God, by name Judah? For says the scripture, "He turned aside out of his road to her, and said unto her, Suffer me to come in unto thee."†

* *Genesis* xxx. 16. † Genesis xxxviii. 16.

(but he was not inclined to offer her any violence), and to see what is that power which is thus veiled, and for what purpose it is thus adorned; and after they had come together it is written, "And she conceived;" but the name of the person is not expressly mentioned. For art conceives and carries along with it him who is learning it, persuading him to feel amorously inclined towards her; and also he who is learning carries with him her who is teaching him, whenever he is fond of learning.

And it often happens that he who professes some one of the indifferent branches of knowledge, when he meets with a pupil of good natural qualifications, boasts of his success in teaching, thinking that he, by himself and alone, is the cause of his pupil's facility in learning. And then, becoming elated and puffing himself, up he holds his head high, and draws up his eyebrows and becomes full of pride, and asks very high terms from those who desire to become his pupils; but those whom he perceives to be poor but still to be eager for instruction, he rejects and repels, as if he were the only person who had found a treasure of wisdom. This is the meaning of the expression, "to conceive," namely, to be full of pride, and to be puffed up with arrogance beyond all moderation, on which account some persons have appeared to dishonour the queen of all the intermediate and indifferent branches of knowledge, virtue, who deserves to be honoured, even for her own sake.

All the souls, therefore, which, in connection with prudence, are pregnant of real things, do nevertheless bring forth, separating and distinguishing between things previously in confusion, like Rebekkah; for she having conceived in her womb ideas of two nations, the knowledge of virtue and the knowledge of wickedness, having a fortunate labour separated and distinguished between the nature of each; but those which have conceived without prudence either miscarry or else bring forth an offspring inclined to evil contention and sophistry, always either aiming darts and arrows at others, or having darts and arrows aimed at themselves. And may we not say that this is natural? for some fancy that they are just conceiving, and others that they are actually pregnant, which is a very different thing; for those who think that they are already pregnant attribute their pregnancy and the birth of their offspring to themselves, and pride themselves upon it;

but those who look upon themselves as now conceiving, admit that they have of themselves nothing which they can call peculiarly their own, but they receive the seed and the prospects of posterity which are showered upon them from without, and they admire him who bestows it, and repel the greatest of evils, namely self-love, by that perfect good, piety towards the gods.

XXIV. In this manner also the seeds of the legislative wisdom, which exists among men, were sown, "For there was," says the same historian, "a man of the tribe of Levi, named Amram, who took to wife one of the daughters of Levi, and had her, and she conceived and brought forth a male child; and seeing that he was a goodly child they concealed him for three months."* This is Moses, the purest mind, the child that is really goodly; the child that received at the same time all legislative and prophetic skill by the means of inspired and heaven-bestowed wisdom; who, being by birth a member of the tribe of Levi, and being flourishing both in the things relating to his mother and in those affecting his father, clings to the truth; and the greatest profession ever made by the author and chief of this tribe is this, for he makes bold to say, that "the only God is alone to be honoured by me;" and nothing besides of all the things that are inferior to Him, neither earth, nor sea, nor rivers, nor the nature of the air, nor the nature of the winds, nor the changes of the atmosphere, nor the appearances of any animals or plants, nor the sun, nor the moon, nor the multitude of the stars moving about in well-arranged revolutions, nor the whole heaven, nor the entire world.

This is a boast of a great and magnanimous soul, to rise above all creation, and to overleap its boundaries, and to cling to the great uncreated God alone, according to his sacred commands, in which we are expressly enjoined "to cleave unto him."† Therefore he, in requital, bestows himself as their inheritance upon those who do cleave unto him, and who serve him without intermission; and the sacred scripture bears its testimony in behalf of this assertion, where it says, "The Lord himself is his inheritance."‡

Thus the souls which are already pregnant are naturally likely to bring forth children, rather than those which are now

* *Exodus ii. 1.* † *Deut.* xxx. 20. ‡ Deut. x. 9.

receiving the seed. But as the eyes of the body do oftentimes see obscurely, and often on the other hand see clearly, so in the same manner does the eye of the soul, at times, receive the particular impressions conveyed to it by things in a most confused and indistinct manner, and at other times it beholds them with the greatest purity and clearness; therefore an indistinct and not clearly manifested conception resembles an embryo which has not yet received any distinct character or similitude within the womb: but that which is clear and distinctly visible, is like one which is completely formed, and which is already fashioned in an artistic manner as to both its inward and its outward parts, and which has already received its suitable character. And with respect to these matters the following law has been enacted with great beauty and propriety: "If while two men are fighting one should strike a woman who is great with child, and her child should come from her before it is completely formed, he shall be mulcted in a fine, according to what the husband of the woman shall impose upon him, and he shall pay the fine deservedly. But if the child be fully formed, he shall pay life for life."*

For it was not the same thing, to destroy a perfect and an imperfect work of the mind, nor is what is only likened by a figure similar to what is really comprehended, nor is what is only hoped for similar to what really exists. On this account, in one case, an uncertain penalty is affixed to an uncertain action; in another, a definite punishment is enacted by law against an act which is perfected, but which is perfected not with respect to virtue, but with reference to what is done in an irreproachable manner, according to some act. For it is not she who has just received the seed, but she who has been for some time pregnant, who brings forth this offspring, professing boasting rather than modesty. For it is impossible that she who has been pregnant some time should miscarry, since it is fitting that the plant should be conducted to perfection by him who sowed it; but it is not strange if some mishap should befall the woman who was pregnant, since she was afflicted with a disease beyond the art of the physician.

XXV. And do not suppose that Hagar is represented as beholding herself as pregnant, by the words, "seeing that she had conceived," but as beholding her mistress Sarah; for after-

* Exodus xxi. 22.

wards she speaks of herself, and says, "Seeing that she was pregnant, she was despised before her."* Why so? Because the intermediate and indifferent arts, and the sciences in accordance with them, see indeed of what they are pregnant, but they nevertheless see in every respect but dimly; but the sciences comprehend clearly and very distinctly. For science is something beyond art, having derived from reason a certain firmness and exemption from error; for this is the definition of art, a system of comprehensions well practised with reference to some desirable end, the word desirable being very properly added by reason of the abundance of evil arts. But the definition of science is a safe and firm comprehension, which, through reason, is not liable to any error. Therefore we call music and grammar, and other pursuits, arts; for those also who are made perfect in them, as musicians, or grammarians, are called artists. But we call philosophy and the other virtues, sciences, and those who are possessed of the knowledge of them we call scientific; for they are prudent, and temperate, and philosophical, not one of whom is ever deceived in the doctrines of a philosophy which he himself has cultivated, any more than the artists, whom I have mentioned before, err in their speculations with respect to their indifferent arts.

For as the eyes see, and still the mind sees more clearly by means of the eyes; and as the ears hear, but nevertheless the mind hears better through the medium of the ears; and as the nostrils smell, and yet the soul smells more precisely through the instrumentality of the nostrils; and in like manner, as the other external senses comprehend their respective appropriate objects, still the mind comprehends them also more purely and distinctly by their ministration. For to speak properly, it is the mind which is the eye of eyes, the hearing of hearing, and the more pure external sense of each of the external senses, using them as ministers in a court of justice, and itself deciding on the nature of the objects submitted to it, so as to approve of some and to reject others. In the same way, those that are called the intermediate arts, resembling the faculties of the body, indulge in contemplations according to certain simple observations of them, but the sciences do so with greater accuracy and with an exceedingly careful investigation.

For the same relation that the mind bears to the outward

* Genesis xvi. 4.

sense, that same does science bear towards art; for, as has been said before, the soul is as it were the outward sense of the outward sense; therefore each of them has attracted to itself some slight things of nature, concerning which it labours and occupies itself, geometry having appropriated lines, and music sounds, and philosophy the whole nature of existing things. For this world is its subject matter, and so is the whole essence, both visible and invisible, of existing things.

What then is there wonderful if the soul, which sees both the whole and the parts, sees them too better than they do, as if it were furnished with larger and more acute eyes? Very naturally, therefore, proper philosophy will behold intermediate instruction its handmaiden, and see that she is pregnant, more than the other will see that she is.

XXVI. And yet even this is not unknown to any one, namely, that philosophy has bestowed upon all the particular sciences their first principles and seeds, from which speculations respecting them appear to arise. For it is geometry which invented equilateral and scalene triangles, and circles, and polygons, and all kinds of other figures. But it was no longer geometry that discovered the nature of a point, and a line, and a superficies, and a solid, which are the roots and foundations of the aforementioned figures. For from whence could it define and pronounce that a point is that which has no parts, that a line is length without breadth; that a superficies is that which has only length and breadth; that a solid is that which has the three properties, length, breadth, and depth? For these discoveries belong to philosophy, and the consideration of these definitions belongs wholly to the philosopher. Again, to write and read is the undertaking of this more imperfect kind of grammar, which some people, perverting the name of, call grammatistica. But to the more perfect kind of grammar belongs the explanation of the great works of the poets and historians.

When, therefore, men are going through the different parts of speech, are they not in so doing trying to drag over to themselves and appropriate as a kind of accessory the discoveries of philosophy? For it is the peculiar province of philosophy to inquire what a conjunction, what a noun, what a verb, what a common noun, what a particular noun, what is deficient in a speech, what is superfluous, what is an affirma-

tive, what an interrogative, what an indirect question, what is a comprehensive expression, what is a supplicatory form of address. For this is a science which has been compounded for the purpose of the investigation of independent propositions, and axioms, and categorems. But, moreover, has not the whole question of semi-vowels, or vowels, or such elements as are completely mute, and the consideration of the sense in which each of these expressions is ordinarily used, and in short every notion connected with the voice, and the elements, and the parts of speech, been thoroughly worked out and brought to an accurate system by philosophy? And those thieves, after having as it were carried off a few drops from her torrent, and having sought to impregnate their own shallow souls with what they have stolen, are not ashamed to bring forth her resources as their own.

XXVII. On which account, being elated and proud, they disregard the mistress to whom in reality the authority and the complete confirmation of their contemplations belong. But she, perceiving their neglect, will convict them, and will speak freely to them, and say, "I am treated unjustly, and in utter violation of our agreement, as far as depends on you who transgress the covenants entered into between us; for from the time that you first took to your bosom the elementary branches of education, you have honoured above measure the offspring of my handmaiden, and have respected her as your wife, and you have so completely repudiated me that you never by any chance came to the same place with me. And perhaps this may be only a suspicion of mine respecting you, arising from your open connection with my servant, which leads me to conjecture your alienation from myself, though it is not really manifest. But if your disposition is contrary to that which I suspect, still it is impossible for any one else to know this, but it is easy to God alone." On which account she says very appropriately, "May God judge between thee and me;* not making haste to condemn him beforehand as having done her wrong, but intimating a doubt, that perhaps he may speedily do her right, which in point of fact is seen to be the case not long afterwards, when he, excusing himself and remedying her doubts, says to her, "Behold thy handmaiden is in thy hands, do unto her as it seemeth good to thee."

* Genesis xvi. 5.

For also, when he calls her her handmaiden, he confesses both facts, both that she is a slave and also that she is a child; for the name of the handmaiden (παιδίσκη) suits both these circumstances. At the same time also, he confesses the contrary things, opposing the child to the full-grown woman, and the mistress to her slave, all but crying out in plain words: I embrace indeed encyclical instruction as a younger maiden and as a handmaiden, but I honour knowledge and prudence as full-grown and a mistress.

And the expression, "She is in thy hands," means, she is in thy power and subject to thee. And this is also a symbol of something else of this nature, namely, that the qualities of the handmaiden come to the hands of the body; for the encyclical branches of knowledge have need of the bodily organs and faculties; but the qualities of the mistress reach the soul; for the things which belong to prudence and knowledge come under the province of reason; so that in proportion as the mind is more powerful and more efficacious than, and in short superior to. the hand, in the same proportion also do I look upon knowledge and wisdom as more admirable than encyclical accomplishment, and I honour them in a higher degree.

Do thou, therefore, O thou who both art the mistress, and who art so accounted by me, take all my encyclical instruction and use it as thy handmaid, doing to it as it shall seem good to thee; for I am not unaware that whatever pleases thee is in all respects good even though it may not always be pleasant, and is useful even though it be far removed from being agreeable. But admonition and reproof are both good and profitable to those who stand in need of correction, which indeed the holy scriptures call by another name, and denominate affliction.

XXVIII. On which account the historian presently adds, "And she afflicted her;" an expression equivalent to, she admonished and corrected her. For a sharp spear is very profitable for those who are corrupted by over security and indolences, just as it is of use with restive horses; since they can scarcely be subdued and made manageable by the whip and by gentle leading. Do you not see how they are utterly unaffected by the prizes proposed to them?* They are fat,

* This is scarcely sense, but the truth probably is that the passage

they are stout, they are sleek, they breathe hard; then they take up the actions of impiety, miserable and wretched men that they are, seeking a melancholy reward, being proclaimed and crowned as conquerors by ungodliness. For by reason of the prosperity which was constantly flowing gently towards them, they looked upon themselves as silver or golden gods, after the fashion of adulterated money, forgetting the real and true coinage.

And Moses testifies to this view of the matter when he says, "He got fat, he became stout, he became swollen, and forsook God who had created him."* So that if excessive relaxation begets the greatest of all evils, impiety, its contrary, affliction, in accordance with the law produces that perfect good, much praised correction; and proceeding outward from this point, he also calls the unleavened bread the symbol of the first festival, "the bread of affliction."† And yet who is there who does not know that feasts and festivals produce cheerful joy and delectation, and not affliction? But it is plain that he is here using in a perverted sense this word for the labour of him who is the corrector. For the most numerous and greatest blessings are usually acquired by laborious practice and exercise, and by vigorously excited labour. But the festival of the soul is emulation, which is labour to attain those things which are most excellent and which are brought to perfection; on which account it is expressly commanded to "eat the unleavened bread with bitter herbs;"‡ not by way of an additional dish, but because men in general look upon the fact of being prevented from swelling and boiling over with their appetites, but being forced to contract and restrain them as a grievous thing, thinking it a bitter thing to unlearn the indulgence of their passions, which is the real feast and festival of a mind which loves honourable contests.

XXIX. It is for this reason that the law, as it appears to me, was given in a place which is called Bitterness; for to do wrong is pleasant, but to act justly is laborious. And this is the most unerring law; for the sacred history says, "And after they had gone out from the passions of Egypt they came to

is corrupt. Mangey proposes one or two emendations, but they are not very satisfactory.

* Deuteronomy xxxii. 15. † Deuteronomy xvi. 3.

‡ *Exodus xii. 8.*

Marah: and they were not able to drink of the water at Marah, for it was bitter. On this account the name of that place was called Bitterness. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And Moses cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a stick, and he cast it into the water, and the water was made sweet. And then he gave him justification and judgment, and then he tempted him."* For the invisible trial and proofs of the soul are in labouring and in enduring bitterness; for then it is hard to know which way it will incline; for many men are very speedily fatigued and fall away, thinking labour a terrible adversary, and they let their hands fall out of weakness, like tired wrestlers, determining to return to Egypt to the indulgence of their passions.

But others, with much endurance and great vigour, supporting the fearful and terrible events of the wilderness pass through the contest of life, keeping their life safe from overthrow and from destruction, and rising up in vigorous contest against the necessities of nature, such as hunger, thirst, cold, and heat, which are in the habit of reducing other persons to slavery, and subduing them with great exuberance of strength. And the cause of this is not merely labour, but also the sweetness with which it is combined; for the scripture says, "And the water was made sweet." But sweet and pleasant labour is called by another name, fondness for labour; for that which is sweet in labour is the love of, and desire for, and admiration of, and friendship for, what is honourable. Let no one, therefore, reject such affliction as this, and let no one think that the table of festivity and cheerfulness is called the bread of affliction for injury rather than for advantage; for the soul which is rightly admonished is supported by the doctrines of instruction.

XXX. This unleavened cake is so sacred that it is enjoined in the holy scriptures, "to place in the innermost part of the temple, on the golden table, twelve loaves of unleavened bread, corresponding in number to the twelve tribes; and those loaves shall be called the shew-bread."† And, again, it is in the law expressly "forbidden to offer any leaven or any honey upon the altar;"‡ for it is a difficult thing to consecrate as holy either the sweetnesses of the pleasures according to the

* Exodus xv. 23. † Exodus xxv. 30. ‡ Leviticus ii. 11.

they are stout, they are sleek, they breathe hard; then they take up the actions of impiety, miserable and wretched men that they are, seeking a melancholy reward, being proclaimed and crowned as conquerors by ungodliness. For by reason of the prosperity which was constantly flowing gently towards them, they looked upon themselves as silver or golden gods, after the fashion of adulterated money, forgetting the real and true coinage.

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But others, with much endurance and great vigour, supporting the fearful and terrible events of the wilderness pass through the contest of life, keeping their life safe from overthrow and from destruction, and rising up in vigorous contest against the necessities of nature, such as hunger, thirst, cold, and heat, which are in the habit of reducing other persons to slavery, and subduing them with great exuberance of strength. And the cause of this is not merely labour, but also the sweetness with which it is combined; for the scripture says, "And the water was made sweet." But sweet and pleasant labour is called by another name, fondness for labour; for that which is sweet in labour is the love of, and desire for, and admiration of, and friendship for, what is honourable. Let no one, therefore, reject such affliction as this, and let no one think that the table of festivity and cheerfulness is called the bread of affliction for injury rather than for advantage: for the soul which is rightly admonished is supported by the doctrines of instruction.

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XXIII. But there are times when virtue, as if making experiment of those who come to her as pupils, to see how much eagerness and earnestness they have, does not come forward to meet them, but veiling her face like Tamar, sits down in the public road, giving room to those who are travelling along the road to look upon her as a harlot, in order that those who are over curious on the subject may take off her veil and disclose her features, and may behold the untouched, and unpolluted, and most exquisite, and truly virgin beauty of modesty and chastity. Who then is he who is fond of investigating, and desirous of learning, and who thinks it not right to leave any of those things which are disguised or concealed unconsidered and unexamined? Who is he, I say, but the chief captain and king, he who abides by and rejoices in the agreements which he has made with God, by name Judah? For says the scripture, "He turned aside out of his road to her, and said unto her, Suffer me to come in unto thee."†

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(but he was not inclined to offer her any violence), and to see what is that power which is thus veiled, and for what purpose it is thus adorned; and after they had come together it is written, "And she conceived;" but the name of the person is not expressly mentioned. For art conceives and carries along with it him who is learning it, persuading him to feel amorously inclined towards her; and also he who is learning carries with him her who is teaching him, whenever he is fond of learning.

And it often happens that he who professes some one of the indifferent branches of knowledge, when he meets with a pupil of good natural qualifications, boasts of his success in teaching, thinking that he, by himself and alone, is the cause of his pupil's facility in learning. And then, becoming elated and puffing himself, up he holds his head high, and draws up his eyebrows and becomes full of pride, and asks very high terms from those who desire to become his pupils; but those whom he perceives to be poor but still to be eager for instruction, he rejects and repels, as if he were the only person who had found a treasure of wisdom. This is the meaning of the expression, "to conceive," namely, to be full of pride, and to be puffed up with arrogance beyond all moderation, on which account some persons have appeared to dishonour the queen of all the intermediate and indifferent branches of knowledge, virtue, who deserves to be honoured, even for her own sake.

All the souls, therefore, which, in connection with prudence, are pregnant of real things, do nevertheless bring forth, separating and distinguishing between things previously in confusion, like Rebekkah; for she having conceived in her womb ideas of two nations, the knowledge of virtue and the knowledge of wickedness, having a fortunate labour separated and distinguished between the nature of each; but those which have conceived without prudence either miscarry or else bring forth an offspring inclined to evil contention and sophistry, always either aiming darts and arrows at others, or having darts and arrows aimed at themselves. And may we not say that this is natural? for some fancy that they are just conceiving, and others that they are actually pregnant, which is a very different thing; for those who think that they are already pregnant attribute their pregnancy and the birth of their offspring to themselves, and pride themselves upon it.

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but those who look upon themselves as now conceiving, admit that they have of themselves nothing which they can call peculiarly their own, but they receive the seed and the prospects of posterity which are showered upon them from without, and they admire him who bestows it, and repel the greatest of evils, namely self-love, by that perfect good, piety towards the gods.

XXIV. In this manner also the seeds of the legislative wisdom, which exists among men, were sown, "For there was," says the same historian, "a man of the tribe of Levi, named Amram, who took to wife one of the daughters of Levi, and had her, and she conceived and brought forth a male child; and seeing that he was a goodly child they concealed him for three months."* This is Moses, the purest mind, the child that is really goodly; the child that received at the same time all legislative and prophetic skill by the means of inspired and heaven-bestowed wisdom; who, being by birth a member of the tribe of Levi, and being flourishing both in the things relating to his mother and in those affecting his father, clings to the truth; and the greatest profession ever made by the author and chief of this tribe is this, for he makes bold to say, that "the only God is alone to be honoured by me;" and nothing besides of all the things that are inferior to Him, neither earth, nor sea, nor rivers, nor the nature of the air, nor the nature of the winds, nor the changes of the atmosphere, nor the appearances of any animals or plants, nor the sun, nor the moon, nor the multitude of the stars moving about in well-arranged revolutions, nor the whole heaven, nor the entire world.

This is a boast of a great and magnanimous soul, to rise above all creation, and to overleap its boundaries, and to cling to the great uncreated God alone, according to his sacred commands, in which we are expressly enjoined "to cleave unto him."† Therefore he, in requital, bestows himself as their inheritance upon those who do cleave unto him, and who serve him without intermission; and the sacred scripture bears its testimony in behalf of this assertion, where it says, "The Lord himself is his inheritance."‡

Thus the souls which are already pregnant are naturally likely to bring forth children, rather than those which are now

* *Exodus ii. 1.* † *Deut.* xxx. 20. ‡ Deut. x. 9.

receiving the seed. But as the eyes of the body do oftentimes see obscurely, and often on the other hand see clearly, so in the same manner does the eye of the soul, at times, receive the particular impressions conveyed to it by things in a most confused and indistinct manner, and at other times it beholds them with the greatest purity and clearness; therefore an indistinct and not clearly manifested conception resembles an embryo which has not yet received any distinct character or similitude within the womb: but that which is clear and distinctly visible, is like one which is completely formed, and which is already fashioned in an artistic manner as to both its inward and its outward parts, and which has already received its suitable character. And with respect to these matters the following law has been enacted with great beauty and propriety: "If while two men are fighting one should strike a woman who is great with child, and her child should come from her before it is completely formed, he shall be mulcted in a fine, according to what the husband of the woman shall impose upon him, and he shall pay the fine deservedly. But if the child be fully formed, he shall pay life for life."*

For it was not the same thing, to destroy a perfect and an imperfect work of the mind, nor is what is only likened by a figure similar to what is really comprehended, nor is what is only hoped for similar to what really exists. On this account, in one case, an uncertain penalty is affixed to an uncertain action; in another, a definite punishment is enacted by law against an act which is perfected, but which is perfected not with respect to virtue, but with reference to what is done in an irreproachable manner, according to some act. For it is not she who has just received the seed, but she who has been for some time pregnant, who brings forth this offspring, professing boasting rather than modesty. For it is impossible that she who has been pregnant some time should miscarry, since it is fitting that the plant should be conducted to perfection by him who sowed it; but it is not strange if some mishap should befall the woman who was pregnant, since she was afflicted with a disease beyond the art of the physician.

XXV. And do not suppose that Hagar is represented as beholding herself as pregnant, by the words, "seeing that she had conceived," but as beholding her mistress Sarah; for after-

* Exodus xxi. 22.

wards she speaks of herself, and says, "Seeing that she was pregnant, she was despised before her."* Why so? Because the intermediate and indifferent arts, and the sciences in accordance with them, see indeed of what they are pregnant, but they nevertheless see in every respect but dimly; but the sciences comprehend clearly and very distinctly. For science is something beyond art, having derived from reason a certain firmness and exemption from error; for this is the definition of art, a system of comprehensions well practised with reference to some desirable end, the word desirable being very properly added by reason of the abundance of evil arts. But the definition of science is a safe and firm comprehension, which, through reason, is not liable to any error. Therefore we call music and grammar, and other pursuits, arts; for those also who are made perfect in them, as musicians, or grammarians, are called artists. But we call philosophy and the other virtues, sciences, and those who are possessed of the knowledge of them we call scientific; for they are prudent, and temperate, and philosophical, not one of whom is ever deceived in the doctrines of a philosophy which he himself has cultivated, any more than the artists, whom I have mentioned before, err in their speculations with respect to their indifferent arts.

For as the eyes see, and still the mind sees more clearly by means of the eyes; and as the ears hear, but nevertheless the mind hears better through the medium of the ears; and as the nostrils smell, and yet the soul smells more precisely through the instrumentality of the nostrils; and in like manner, as the other external senses comprehend their respective appropriate objects, still the mind comprehends them also more purely and distinctly by their ministration. For to speak properly, it is the mind which is the eye of eyes, the hearing of hearing, and the more pure external sense of each of the external senses, using them as ministers in a court of justice, and itself deciding on the nature of the objects submitted to it, so as to approve of some and to reject others. In the same way, those that are called the intermediate arts, resembling the faculties of the body, indulge in contemplations according to certain simple observations of them, but the sciences do so with greater accuracy and with an exceedingly careful investigation.

For the same relation that the mind bears to the outward

* Genesis xvi. 4.

sense, that same does science bear towards art; for, as has been said before, the soul is as it were the outward sense of the outward sense; therefore each of them has attracted to itself some slight things of nature, concerning which it labours and occupies itself, geometry having appropriated lines, and music sounds, and philosophy the whole nature of existing things. For this world is its subject matter, and so is the whole essence, both visible and invisible, of existing things.

What then is there wonderful if the soul, which sees both the whole and the parts, sees them too better than they do, as if it were furnished with larger and more acute eyes? Very naturally, therefore, proper philosophy will behold intermediate instruction its handmaiden, and see that she is pregnant, more than the other will see that she is.

XXVI. And yet even this is not unknown to any one, namely, that philosophy has bestowed upon all the particular sciences their first principles and seeds, from which speculations respecting them appear to arise. For it is geometry which invented equilateral and scalene triangles, and circles, and polygons, and all kinds of other figures. But it was no longer geometry that discovered the nature of a point, and a line, and a superficies, and a solid, which are the roots and foundations of the aforementioned figures. For from whence could it define and pronounce that a point is that which has no parts, that a line is length without breadth; that a superficies is that which has only length and breadth; that a solid is that which has the three properties, length, breadth, and depth? For these discoveries belong to philosophy, and the consideration of these definitions belongs wholly to the philosopher. Again, to write and read is the undertaking of this more imperfect kind of grammar, which some people, perverting the name of, call grammatistica. But to the more perfect kind of grammar belongs the explanation of the great works of the poets and historians.

When, therefore, men are going through the different parts of speech, are they not in so doing trying to drag over to themselves and appropriate as a kind of accessory the discoveries of philosophy? For it is the peculiar province of philosophy to inquire what a conjunction, what a noun, what a verb, what a common noun, what a particular noun, what is deficient in a speech, what is superfluous, what is an affirma-

tive, what an interrogative, what an indirect question, what is a comprehensive expression, what is a supplicatory form of address. For this is a science which has been compounded for the purpose of the investigation of independent propositions, and axioms, and categorems. But, moreover, has not the whole question of semi-vowels, or vowels, or such elements as are completely mute, and the consideration of the sense in which each of these expressions is ordinarily used, and in short every notion connected with the voice, and the elements, and the parts of speech, been thoroughly worked out and brought to an accurate system by philosophy? And those thieves, after having as it were carried off a few drops from her torrent, and having sought to impregnate their own shallow souls with what they have stolen, are not ashamed to bring forth her resources as their own.

XXVII. On which account, being elated and proud, they disregard the mistress to whom in reality the authority and the complete confirmation of their contemplations belong. But she, perceiving their neglect, will convict them, and will speak freely to them, and say, "I am treated unjustly, and in utter violation of our agreement, as far as depends on you who transgress the covenants entered into between us; for from the time that you first took to your bosom the elementary branches of education, you have honoured above measure the offspring of my handmaiden, and have respected her as your wife, and you have so completely repudiated me that you never by any chance came to the same place with me. And perhaps this may be only a suspicion of mine respecting you, arising from your open connection with my servant, which leads me to conjecture your alienation from myself, though it is not really manifest. But if your disposition is contrary to that which I suspect, still it is impossible for any one else to know this, but it is easy to God alone." On which account she says very appropriately, "May God judge between thee and me;* not making haste to condemn him beforehand as having done her wrong, but intimating a doubt, that perhaps he may speedily do her right, which in point of fact is seen to be the case not long afterwards, when he, excusing himself and remedying her doubts, says to her, "Behold thy handmaiden is in thy hands, do unto her as it seemeth good to thee."

* Genesis xvi. 5.

For also, when he calls her her handmaiden, he confesses both facts, both that she is a slave and also that she is a child; for the name of the handmaiden (παιδίσκη) suits both these circumstances. At the same time also, he confesses the contrary things, opposing the child to the full-grown woman, and the mistress to her slave, all but crying out in plain words: I embrace indeed encyclical instruction as a younger maiden and as a handmaiden, but I honour knowledge and prudence as full-grown and a mistress.

And the expression, "She is in thy hands," means, she is in thy power and subject to thee. And this is also a symbol of something else of this nature, namely, that the qualities of the handmaiden come to the hands of the body; for the encyclical branches of knowledge have need of the bodily organs and faculties; but the qualities of the mistress reach the soul; for the things which belong to prudence and knowledge come under the province of reason; so that in proportion as the mind is more powerful and more efficacious than, and in short superior to. the hand, in the same proportion also do I look upon knowledge and wisdom as more admirable than encyclical accomplishment, and I honour them in a higher degree.

Do thou, therefore, O thou who both art the mistress, and who art so accounted by me, take all my encyclical instruction and use it as thy handmaid, doing to it as it shall seem good to thee; for I am not unaware that whatever pleases thee is in all respects good even though it may not always be pleasant, and is useful even though it be far removed from being agreeable. But admonition and reproof are both good and profitable to those who stand in need of correction, which indeed the holy scriptures call by another name, and denominate affliction.

XXVIII. On which account the historian presently adds, "And she afflicted her;" an expression equivalent to, she admonished and corrected her. For a sharp spear is very profitable for those who are corrupted by over security and indolences, just as it is of use with restive horses; since they can scarcely be subdued and made manageable by the whip and by gentle leading. Do you not see how they are utterly unaffected by the prizes proposed to them?* They are fat,

* This is scarcely sense, but the truth probably is that the passage

they are stout, they are sleek, they breathe hard; then they take up the actions of impiety, miserable and wretched men that they are, seeking a melancholy reward, being proclaimed and crowned as conquerors by ungodliness. For by reason of the prosperity which was constantly flowing gently towards them, they looked upon themselves as silver or golden gods, after the fashion of adulterated money, forgetting the real and true coinage.

And Moses testifies to this view of the matter when he says, "He got fat, he became stout, he became swollen, and forsook God who had created him."* So that if excessive relaxation begets the greatest of all evils, impiety, its contrary, affliction, in accordance with the law produces that perfect good, much praised correction; and proceeding outward from this point, he also calls the unleavened bread the symbol of the first festival, "the bread of affliction."† And yet who is there who does not know that feasts and festivals produce cheerful joy and delectation, and not affliction? But it is plain that he is here using in a perverted sense this word for the labour of him who is the corrector. For the most numerous and greatest blessings are usually acquired by laborious practice and exercise, and by vigorously excited labour. But the festival of the soul is emulation, which is labour to attain those things which are most excellent and which are brought to perfection; on which account it is expressly commanded to "eat the unleavened bread with bitter herbs;"‡ not by way of an additional dish, but because men in general look upon the fact of being prevented from swelling and boiling over with their appetites, but being forced to contract and restrain them as a grievous thing, thinking it a bitter thing to unlearn the indulgence of their passions, which is the real feast and festival of a mind which loves honourable contests.

XXIX. It is for this reason that the law, as it appears to me, was given in a place which is called Bitterness; for to do wrong is pleasant, but to act justly is laborious. And this is the most unerring law: for the sacred history says, "And after they had gone out from the passions of Egypt they came to

is corrupt. Mangey proposes one or two emendations, but they are not very satisfactory.

* Deuteronomy xxxii. 15. † Deuteronomy xvi. 3.

‡ *Exodus xii. 8.*

Marah: and they were not able to drink of the water at Marah, for it was bitter. On this account the name of that place was called Bitterness. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And Moses cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a stick, and he cast it into the water, and the water was made sweet. And then he gave him justification and judgment, and then he tempted him."* For the invisible trial and proofs of the soul are in labouring and in enduring bitterness; for then it is hard to know which way it will incline; for many men are very speedily fatigued and fall away, thinking labour a terrible adversary, and they let their hands fall out of weakness, like tired wrestlers, determining to return to Egypt to the indulgence of their passions.

But others, with much endurance and great vigour, supporting the fearful and terrible events of the wilderness pass through the contest of life, keeping their life safe from overthrow and from destruction, and rising up in vigorous contest against the necessities of nature, such as hunger, thirst, cold, and heat, which are in the habit of reducing other persons to slavery, and subduing them with great exuberance of strength. And the cause of this is not merely labour, but also the sweetness with which it is combined; for the scripture says, "And the water was made sweet." But sweet and pleasant labour is called by another name, fondness for labour; for that which is sweet in labour is the love of, and desire for, and admiration of, and friendship for, what is honourable. Let no one, therefore, reject such affliction as this, and let no one think that the table of festivity and cheerfulness is called the bread of affliction for injury rather than for advantage; for the soul which is rightly admonished is supported by the doctrines of instruction.

XXX. This unleavened cake is so sacred that it is enjoined in the holy scriptures, "to place in the innermost part of the temple, on the golden table, twelve loaves of unleavened bread, corresponding in number to the twelve tribes; and those loaves shall be called the shew-bread."† And, again, it is in the law expressly "forbidden to offer any leaven or any honey upon the altar;"‡ for it is a difficult thing to consecrate as holy either the sweetnesses of the pleasures according to the

* Exodus xv. 23. † Exodus xxv. 30. ‡ Leviticus ii. 11.

body, or the light and unsubstantial elations of the soul, since they are by their own intrinsic nature profane and unholy.

Does not, then, the prophetic word, by name Moses, very rightly speak in dignified language when he says, "Thou shalt remember all the road by which the Lord God led thee in the wilderness, and how he afflicted thee, and tried thee, and proved thee, that he might know what was in thy heart, and whether thou wouldest keep his commandments. Did he not afflict thee and oppress thee with hunger, and feed thee with manna which thy fathers knew not, that he might make thee know that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God?"*

Who, then, is so impious as to conceive that God is one who afflicts, and who brings that most pitiable death of hunger upon those who are not able to live without food? For God is good, and the cause of good things, bounteous, the saviour, the supporter, the giver of wealth, the giver of great gifts, driving out wickedness from the sacred boundaries; for thus did he drive out the burdens of the earth, Adam and Cain, from paradise. Let us, then, not be led aside by words, but let us consider and examine what meaning is intended to be conveyed under figurative expressions, and pronounce that the words "he afflicted," are equivalent to "he instructed, and he admonished, and he corrected." And when it is said that he oppressed them with hunger, it does not mean that he caused a deficiency of meat and drink, but of pleasures, and desires, and fear, and grief, and acts of injustice, and, in short, of all things which are the works of wickedness or of the passions. And what is said immediately afterwards is an evidence of this: "He fed thee with manna." Is it, then, proper to call that food which, without any exertion or hardship on his part, and without any trouble of his is given to man, not out of the earth as is usual, but from heaven, a marvellous work, afforded for the benefit of those who are to be permitted to avail themselves of it, the cause of hunger and affliction, and not rather, on the contrary, the cause of prosperity and happiness, of freedom from fear, and of a happy state of orderly living? But men in general and the common herd think that those who are nourished on the word of God live in a miserable and wretched manner; for they are without the taste of the all-nourishing

* Deuteronomy viii. 2.

food of wisdom; but they are not aware that they are living in the height of happiness.

XXXI. Thus, therefore, there is a certain description of affliction which is profitable, so that its very most humiliating form, even slavery, is accounted a great good. And there is a father who is recorded in the sacred writings as having prayed for this, for his son, namely, the most excellent Isaac for the foolish Esau; for he says somewhere, "By thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother."* Judging that destiny to be the most advantageous one for a man who had chosen war rather than peace, and who was as it were constantly armed and engaged in battle, by reason of the sedition and disorder constantly existing in his soul, the destiny namely of being a subject and a servant, and of obeying all the commands which the lover of temperance should lay upon him.

And it is from this consideration, as it appears to me that one of the disciples of Moses, by name the peaceful, who in his native language is called Solomon, says, "My son, neglect not the instruction of God, and be not grieved when thou art reproved by him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."† Thus, then, scourging and reproof are looked upon as good, so that by means of it agreement and relationship with God arise. For what can be more nearly related than a son is to his father, and a father to his son?

But, that we may not seem to be too prolix connecting one argument with another, we will, besides what we have already said, just add one most evident proof that a certain description of affliction is the work of virtue. For there is such a law as this, "Thou shalt not afflict any widow or orphan, but if thou dost afflict them with wickedness." . . . . . What does this mean? Is it then possible to be afflicted by something else? For if afflictions were the work of wickedness alone, then it would be superfluous to add what would be admitted by all, and which would be understood without any such addition. But, you will most certainly say, I know that men are reproved by virtue, and instructed by wisdom; on which account I do not blame every kind of affliction, but I very greatly admire that which is the work of justice and of the

* Genesis xxvii. 40. † Proverbs iii. 11.

law; for that corrects by means of punishment, but that which proceeds from folly and wickedness and is pernicious, I do, as becomes me, detest, and pronounce real evil. When, therefore, you hear that Hagar was afflicted by Sarah, you must not suppose that any of those things befell her, which arise from rivalry and quarrels among women; for the question is not here about woman, but about minds; the one being practised in the branches of elementary instruction, and the other being devoted to the labours of virtue.

A TREATISE ON FUGITIVES.

I. "And Sarah afflicted her, and she fled from before her face. And the angel of the Lord found her sitting by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by a fountain which is in the way to Shur. And the angel of the Lord said unto her: 'Thou handmaiden of Sarah, whence art thou come? and whither art thou going?' And she answered and said: 'I am fleeing from the face of Sarah, my mistress.' And the angel of the Lord said unto her: 'Return unto thy mistress, and be thou humbled beneath her hands.' And the angel of the Lord said unto her: 'Behold, thou art with child, and thou shalt bring forth a son, and shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard the cry of thy humiliation. He shall be a rude man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him.' "*

Having in our former treatise spoken what was becoming respecting the preliminary branches of education, and respecting affliction, we will now proceed in regular order to discuss the topic of fugitives. Now Moses often mentions persons who flee, as here he says concerning Hagar, that being afflicted she fled from the face of her mistress. I think therefore that there are three causes for flight—hatred, fear, and shame. Now women leave their husbands out of hatred, and for the same reason men desert their wives. But children flee from their parents, and servants from their masters, out of fear. And lastly, friends avoid their companions out of shame, when

* Genesis xvi. 8.

they have done anything which is displeasing to them And before now I have known instances of fathers who have led a life of effeminate luxury, reverencing the austere and philosophical lives of their sons, and out of shame preferring to live in the country rather than in the city.

Now of all these three causes, one may find instances revealed in the sacred scriptures Accordingly, Jacob, the practiser of virtue, fled from his father-in-law Laban out of hatred, and from his brother Esau out of fear, as I shall show presently. But Hagar flees out of shame. And a proof of this is, that the angel, that is the word of God, met her, with the intent to recommend her what she ought to do, and to guide her in her return to her mistress's house. For he encouraged her, and said unto her: "The Lord has heard the cry of thy humiliation," which you uttered, not out of fear, nor yet out of hatred. For the one is the feeling of an ignoble soul, and the other of one which loves contention, but under the influence of that copy of temperance and modesty, shame. For it was natural, if she had fled out of fear, that he would have encouraged her mistress, who was holding out threats to alarm her, to comfort her, and to restore her to tranquillity. For then it would have been safe for the fugitive to return, and not before. But no one intercedes for her to her mistress, inasmuch as she was already appeased by herself. But this angel, who is reproof, at the same time friendly and full of advice, out of his good-will teaches her not to feel only shame, but also to entertain confidence, for that modesty is but half a virtue, when separated from proper boldness.

II. Therefore the account which follows will show these characteristics more accurately. But we must return to the heads of the question which we have already set forth, and begin with those who flee under the influence of hatred. "For," says the scripture, "Jacob concealed his purpose from Laban the Syrian, so as not to tell him that he was fleeing, and he fled, he and all that he had."* What then was the cause of his hatred? For perhaps you are desirous to hear this.

There are some persons who make to themselves gods of substance destitute of all distinctive quality, and species, and shape, neither knowing the cause which puts things in motion, nor showing any anxiety to learn of those who do know, but

* Genesis xvi. 8.

being contented with their ignorance and want of understanding of the most important kind of learning, which was in fact the first and only thing of which it was absolutely necessary to labour for the understanding. Laban now is one of this kind of persons; for the sacred scriptures attribute to him a flock devoid of all distinctive marks. And matter, without any distinctive characteristics, is without any marks in the universe, and so is in men the soul, which is destitute of learning and which has no instructors. But there are others who belong to a better portion, who say that the mind has come and arranged everything, bringing the disorder which arose from an ochlocracy among all existing things, into the order established by the legitimate authority of kingly power. Of this company Jacob is a follower, who presides over the marked and party-coloured flock.

On the other hand the species in the universe is distinguished by marks and is of varied colour, and so also in men is the mind which has been well instructed and which is fond of learning. And he who is marked, and who is the companion of true kingly power, having received a great deal of the social affection from nature, goes to him who has no distinguishing marks, and who, as I have said, makes himself gods of the material powers, and who thinks that besides them there is no effectual cause of anything, to teach him that his opinions are not correct. For the world has been created, and has by all means derived its existence from some extraneous cause. But the word itself of the Creator is the seal by which each of existing things is invested with form. In accordance with which fact perfect species also does from the very beginning follow things when created, as being an impression and image of the perfect word. For the animal when first created is imperfect as to quantity; and a proof of this is the gradual growth which takes place at each successive age. But it is perfect as to quality. For the same quality remains in it, as having been stamped upon it by the divine word which abides permanently and never charges.

III. But seeing that he is dumb with respect to learning and to all desirable and legitimate authority, he very naturally thinks of flight. For he is afraid that in addition to not being able to derive any advantage, he may even be injured. For all connections with the foolish injures us, and very often the soul

against its will becomes stamped with the impression of their insanity of mind. And, in truth, instruction is naturally a thing inimical to ignorance, and so is industry to indifference. In reference to which fact the powers devoted to practice and meditation, when they are set free, cry out, giving a full account of the causes of their hatred: "Have we not any longer a share and an inheritance in the house of our father? Are we not now accounted aliens by him? For he has sold us, and he has eaten up and devoured our money. All the wealth and all the glory which God took from our father shall belong to us and to our children." * For those who are free both in name and also in their minds do not consider any foolish person as either rich or glorious, but look upon all such persons, so to say, as inglorious and poor, even if they exceed the fortune of wealthy kings. For they do not say that they will have the riches of their father, but the riches which have been taken away; nor do they say that they shall possess his glory, but the glory which has been taken away from him.

But the wicked man is deprived of all genuine riches and of all true and honourable glory; for these blessings are procured by wisdom, and temperance, and the kindred dispositions of the soul, and are inherited by those souls which love virtue. Therefore, it is not the things which belong to the wicked man, but those of which he is destitute, that are the abundance and the glory of the good. And he is destitute of virtues which are their possession, in order that what is said in another place may be consistent with the passage already quoted: "Let us sacrifice the abominations of Egypt to the Lord our God."† For the virtues are perfect and blameless offerings, and so are the actions in accordance with virtue, which the Egyptian body, being devoted to the passions, abominates; for, as in this passage, those things which, according to the principles of natural philosophy, are reckoned profane among the Egyptians are called sacred by the Israelites who see acutely, and are all offered as sacrifices; so, in the same manner, the man who is the companion of virtue will be the heir of those things of which every foolish man is deprived and destitute.

And these things are true glory, which in fact differs in no

* Genesis xxxi. 14. † Exodus viii. 26.

respect from knowledge, and wealth, not blind wealth, but that which is the most sharp-sighted of all existing things, which never receives any base money, not even anything whatever devoid of life unless it be thoroughly tried and approved. Very naturally, therefore, that person will flee from him who has no participation in divine blessings, who even in the matters in which he accuses another does without perceiving it accuse himself also, when he says, "If thou hadst told me I would have sent thee away."* For this very thing was a worthy cause for your being deserted, if you, being the servant of an infinite number of masters, pretending to have been invested with command and authority, proclaimed liberty to others.

But I, says he, did not take a man as my assistant in the road which leads to virtue, but I listened to the divine oracles which enjoined me to depart from hence, and which even now continues to direct my course. And how would you have sent me away? surely, as you boast, using pompous language, with a joy which to me would have been sorrowful, with music which would have been no music, with dances, and noises destitute of articulate sound and of reason, striking blows on the soul through the medium of the ears, and with the harp, and with sounds unsuited to the lyre, and unsuited to harmony, not being so much organs, as the actions of a whole life. But these are the things by reason of which I meditated flight; but you, as it seems, contemplated dragging me back from my flight, in order that I might return on account of the deceitful and seductive nature of the external senses, by which I was scarcely able to permit myself to be carried forward.

IV. Hatred then, was the cause of the flight which I have been here describing; but fear was the cause of the one which I am about to mention. For, says the sacred historian, Rebekkah said unto Jacob, "Behold, Esau thy brother threateneth to kill thee: now therefore, my son, hear my voice, and rise up, and flee to Laban my brother, to Charran, and dwell with him certain days, until the anger of thy brother is turned away, and he forget what thou hast done unto him; and then I will send again, and fetch thee back from thence."† For it was worth while to fear, lest the worse portion of the soul, lying in an ambuscade, or else moving forwards openly to the attack, might overthrow and cast down the better part; and so

* *Genesis xxxi. 27.* † Genesis xxvii. 42.

the counsel of the right-minded perseverance, Rebekkah, was very good.

But she says, when you see the bad man coming in with great impetuosity, against virtue, and making great account of those things which it is more proper to disregard, such as wealth, glory, and pleasure, and praising the performance of actions of injustice, as being the cause of all the advantages before mentioned: for we see that those who act unjustly, are, for the most part, men possessed of much silver, and of much gold, and of high reputation. Do not then, turn away to the opposite road, and devote yourself to a life of penury, and abasement, and austerity, and solitude; for, by so doing, you will irritate your adversary, and arm a more bitter enemy against yourself. Consider, therefore, now by what conduct you may avoid his attacks; apply yourself to the same things, I do not mean the same pursuits, but to the same things which are the efficient causes of those things which have been mentioned; to honours, to offices of authority, to silver, to gold, to possessions, to money, to colours, to forms, to exceeding nicety; and when you meet with such things, then, like a skilful workman, impress the most beautiful appearance on the material substances: and perfect a most excellent work. Do you not know, that if a man unacquainted with navigation, takes the management of a ship, which might otherwise have reached the harbour in safety, he overturns it? but that a man, skilful as a pilot, has often saved a ship which otherwise must have been lost? And also, some sick persons, owing to the unskilfulness of their medical attendants, have been severely afflicted with disease; while others, through the skill of their doctors, have escaped from dangerous sicknesses? And why need I have been prolix on this point; for always the things which are done with skill, are a conviction of those which are done unskilfully; and the true praise of the one is an unerring accusation of the other.

V. If therefore, you wish to convict a wicked man, who is also possessed of great wealth, do not disdain an abundance of money; for the unhappy man will soon show himself in his true colours, either as an illiberal and slavish-minded skin-flint, and parer of people by usury, or else as a profligate and intemperate spendthrift, very ready to devour and to squander, and a most zealous companion of harlots and brothel-keepers.

and pimps, and of every kind of profligate company. But you will rather bestow your contributions on those who are in want of friends, and will do favours to, and bestow your liberality on, your country, and will assist to portion out the daughters of needy parents, giving them, in addition to their inheritance, a most sufficient dowry; and in fact, very nearly throwing all your own property into the common stock, you will invite to a participation in it all who are worthy of favour.

And, in the same manner, when you wish to reprove any wicked man who is mad with a high opinion of himself and full of boasting, while you are able yourself to attain to distinguished honours, do not disdainfully reject the praise of the multitude: for by so doing you will trip up and supplant the miserable man who takes long strides, and who gives himself airs. For he will abuse his own renown for the purpose of behaving with insolence and contumely to others who are better than he, promoting those who are worse, so as to set them above them; while you, on the contrary, will give all worthy persons a share in your renown, giving in this manner security to those who are good, and by your admonitions improving those who are not so good. And if you ever go to a drinking party or to a costly entertainment, go with a good confidence; for you will put to shame the intemperate man by your own dexterity. For he, falling on his belly, and opening his insatiable desires even before he opens his mouth, will glut himself in a most shameless and indecorous manner, and will seize the things belonging to his neighbour, and will lick up everything without thinking.

And when he is completely sated with eating, then drinking, as the poets say, with his mouth open, he will make himself an object for the laughter and ridicule of all those who behold him. But do you adopt a moderate course without being compelled thereto, and if ever you are constrained to indulge yourself in things beyond moderation, still make reason the governor of the necessity, and never go so far as to change pleasure into unpleasantness, but, if we may speak in such a manner, be drunk in a sober manner.

VI. And here therefore truth may not unreasonably blame those who, without any examination, abandon the business and means of regulating a civil life, and who say that they have learnt to despise glory and pleasure; for those men are be-

having insolently, and do not really despise these things, making an open boast of their sordid, and melancholy, and stern appearance, and putting forth their austere and dirty way of living as a bait, as if they were lovers of orderly behaviour, and modesty, and endurance; but they are not able to deceive those who look into them with greater accuracy, and who pierce within their disguise, and who are not led astray by outward show; for having removed these veils and coverings from the others, they see what is treasured up and concealed within, and learn what kind of qualities and nature are theirs: and if they are good they admire them, and if they are evil they ridicule them, and hate them because of their hypocrisy.

Let us then say to such persons, "Are ye zealous admirers and imitators of a life which hates mixing with and joining in the society of others, a solitary and uncompanionable life? For what specimen of virtue have you ever exhibited while living in the society of others? Do ye disdain money? Have you, then, who have been professed money-dealers, been desirous to act justly? Professing to disregard the pleasures of the belly and of the parts beneath the belly, have you behaved with moderation when you have had abundant opportunities of indulging these appetites? Do you despise glory? Then, when you have been placed in situations of authority, have you cultivated an affable humility? Perhaps you have ridiculed a participation in the affairs of state, not considering how useful an employment that is. Have you then first exercised yourselves in, and directed your attention to, the public and the private business of life? and having become skilful politicians and experienced economists by means of the kindred virtues of economical and political science, have you, in your exceeding abundance of these things, prepared for your migration to another and a better kind of life? For it is proper to go through a practical life before beginning the theoretical one: as being a sort of rehearsal of the more perfect contest and exhibition.

In this way it is possible to escape from the charge of hesitation and indolence. Thus also an express injunction is given to the Levites to fulfil their works till the time that they are fifty years of age; and after they are released from all active ministrations, to consider and contemplate each particular

thing, receiving as a reward for their well-doing in active life, another life which delights only in knowledge and contemplation. And at other times it is necessary that those who think themselves worthy to claim the just things of God, should first of all fulfil their human duties; for it is great folly to expect to attain to what is of greater importance, while one is unable properly to discharge what is of less consequence. First of all, therefore, be ye known for your virtue among men, that you may also become established by that which relates to God." This is the advice which perseverance gives to the man inclined to the practice of virtue; but we must now examine her several expressions with accuracy.

VII. "Behold," says she, "Esau thy brother threatens thee." But is it not natural for that disposition, hard as oak and obstinate through ignorance, by name Esau, who offers the baits of mortal life to lead you to your destruction; such baits, I mean, as wealth, glory, pleasure, and other kindred temptations, to seek to kill thee? But do you, O my child! flee from this contest at present, for you have not as yet had complete strength for it given to you, but still the nerves of your soul, like those of a child, are somewhat soft and weak. And it is for this reason that she calls him "my child," which is a name of affection, and also one which indicates his tender age; for we look upon the disposition which is inclined to the practice of virtue, and which is young, as worthy of affection in comparison of the full-grown man.

But such a person is worthy to carry off the prizes which are proposed for children, but he is not yet able to win the prizes offered for the men. But the best contest for men to engage in is the service of the only God. Therefore if, even before we have been completely purified, but while we appear only to have proceeded so far as to wash off the things which defile our life, we have arrived at the vestibule of God's service, we departed again more quickly than we approached, not being able to endure the austere way of living dictated by that service, nor the sleepless desire to please God, nor the continual and unwearied labour; flee, therefore, at this present time from what is best and from what is worst. What is worst are the fabulous inventions, the unmetrical and inharmonious poems, the conceptions and persuasions which from ignorance *are hard and stubborn,* of which Esau is the namesake. What

is best is the offering; for the race inclined to service is an offering meet for God, being consecrated to him alone in the great chief priesthood; for to dwell with what is evil is most pernicious, and to dwell with perfect good is most dangerous. Accordingly Jacob both flees from Esau, and also dwells apart from his parents; for being fond of practising virtue and still labouring at it, he flees from wickedness, and yet is unable to live in company with perfect virtue so as to have no need of an instructor.

VIII. On which account we read, "He will depart to Laban," not to him as the Syrian, but as the brother of his mother; that is to say, he will go to the brilliancies of life; for Laban, being interpreted, means "white." And when he has arrived there he will not hold his head too high, from being puffed up with the happy events of fortune; for the word Syrian, being translated, means "sublime." But now he does not recollect the Syrian Laban, but the brother of Rebekkah; for the means of life being given to a bad man, inflate and raise up to a great height the mind which is devoid of wisdom, which is called the Syrian; but if they are bestowed on a lover of instruction, then they make the mind inclined to abide by the steady and solid doctrines of virtue and excellence. This is the brother of Rebekkah, that is to say, of perseverance, and he dwells in Charran, which name, being interpreted, means "holes," a symbol of the external senses; for he who is still moving about in mortal life has need of the organs of the external senses. "Dwell, therefore," says she, "O my child, with him," not all thy life, but "certain days;" that is to say, learn to be acquainted with the country of the external senses; know thyself and thy own parts, and what each is, and for what end it was made, and how it is by nature calculated to energise, and who it is who moves those marvellous things, and pulls the strings, being himself invisible, in an invisible manner, whether it is the mind that is in thee, or the mind of the universe.

And when you have become thoroughly acquainted with yourself, then examine accurately also the peculiar qualities of Laban; the things which are accounted brilliant instances of the success of empty glory; but do not you be deceived by any one of them, but like a good workman adapt them all in a skilful manner to your own necessities; for if, while immersed

in this political and much confused life, you display a stable and well-instructed disposition, I will send for you from thence that you may receive the same prize which also your parents received: and the prize is the unchangeable and unhesitating service of the only wise God.

IX. And his father also gives him similar precepts, adding a few trifling injunctions; for he says, "Rise up and flee into Mesopotamia, to the house of Bethuel, the father of thy mother, and from thence take a wife to thyself of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother."* Again, he also forbears to speak of Laban as a Syrian, but he calls him Rebekkah's brother, who is about to form a connection with the practiser of virtue by means of intermarriage.

Flee, therefore, into Mesopotamia, that is to say, into the middle of the rapid torrent of life, and take care not to be washed away and swollowed up by its whirlpools, but standing firmly, vigorously repel the violent, impetuous course of affairs which overflows and rushes upon thee from above, from both sides, and from every quarter; for you will find the house of wisdom a calm and secure haven, which will gladly receive you when you are anchored within it.

But Bethuel in the sacred scriptures is called wisdom; and this name, being translated, means "the daughter of God;" and the legitimate daughter, always a virgin, having received a nature which shall never be touched or defiled, both on account of her own orderly decency, and also because of the high dignity of her Father. And he calls Bethuel the father of Rebekkah. How, then, can the daughter of God, namely, wisdom, be properly called a father? is it because the name indeed of wisdom is feminine but the sex masculine? For indeed all the virtues bear the names of women, but have the powers and actions of most full-grown men, since whatever is subsequent to God, even if it be the most ancient of all other things, still has only the second place when compared with that omnipotent Being, and appears not so much masculine as feminine, in accordance with its likeness to the other creatures; for as the male always has the precedence, the female falls short, and is inferior in rank.

We say, therefore, without paying any attention to the difference here existing in the names, that wisdom, the

* *Genesis* xxviii. 2.

daughter of good, is both male and a father, and that it is that which sows the seed of, and which begets learning in, souls, and also education, and knowledge, and prudence, all honourable and praiseworthy things. And from this source it is that Jacob, the practiser of wisdom, seeks to procure a wife for himself; for from what other quarter should he seek a partner rather than from the house of wisdom? and where else should he find an opinion free from all reproach, with which to live all his life? . . . . *

X. But Moses has spoken more accurately about flights when he was establishing the law with respect to homicides, in which he goes through every species of homicide, that of intentional murder, that of unintentional slaying, that of murder by deliberate attack, or by crafty treachery. Repeat the law: "If any man strike another and he die, the striker shall die the death. And if a man do it not intentionally, but if God delivers him into his hand, then I will give thee a place to which he who has slain another shall flee. And if any one set upon his neighbour to slay him by treachery, and flee away, thou shalt drag him even from the altar to put him to death."† Knowing very well that the law is here adding no superfluous word from any indescribable impetuosity in its description of the matter, I doubted within myself why it does not merely say that he who has slain another shall die, and why it has added, that he shall die the death; for how else does any one die, who dies at all, except dying the death?

Therefore, betaking myself for instruction to a wise woman, whose name is Consideration, I was released from my difficulty, for she taught me that some persons who are living are dead, and that some who are dead still live: she pronounced that the wicked, even if they arrive at the latest period of old age, are only dead, inasmuch as they are deprived of life according to virtue; but that the good, even if they are separated from all union with the body, live for ever, inasmuch as they have received an immortal portion.

XI. Moreover, she confirmed this opinion of hers by the sacred scriptures, one of which ran in this form: "You who cleave unto the Lord your God are all alive to this day:"‡ for she saw that those who sought refuge with God and became

* The rest of this chapter is lost.

† Exodus xxi. 12. ‡ Deuteronomy iv. 4.

his suppliants, were the only living persons, and that all others were dead. And Moses, it seems, testifies to the immortality of those persons, when he adds, "You are all alive to this day;" and this day is interminable eternity, from which there is no departure; for the periods of months, and years, and, in short, all the divisions of time, are only the inventions of men doing honour to number. But the unerring proper name of eternity is "to-day;" for the sun is always the same, without ever changing, going at one time beneath the earth, and at another time above the earth, and by him it is that day and night, the measures of time, are distinguished.

She also confirmed her statement by another passage in scripture of the following purport: "Behold, I have set before thy face life and death, good and evil."* Therefore, O all-wise man, good and virtue mean life, and evil and wickedness mean death. And in another passage we read, "This is thy life, and thy length of days, to love the Lord thy God."† This is the most admirable definition of immortal life, to be occupied by a love and affection for God unembarrassed by any connection with the flesh or with the body. Thus, the priests, Nadab and Abihu, die in order that they may live; taking an immortal existence in exchange for this mortal life, and departing from the creature to the uncreated God. And it is with reference to this fact that the symbols of incorruptibility are thus celebrated: "Then they died before the Lord;"‡ that is to say, they lived; for it is not lawful for any dead person to come into the sight of the Lord.

And again, this is what the Lord himself has said, "I will be sanctified in those who come nigh unto me."§ "But the dead," as it is also said in the Psalms, "shall not praise the Lord,"|| for that is the work of the living; but Cain, that shameless man, that fratricide, is no where spoken of in the law as dying; but there is an oracle delivered respecting him in such words as these: "The Lord God put a mark upon Cain, as a sign that no one who found him should kill him."¶ Why so? Because, I imagine, wickedness is an evil which can never end, but which is kindled and is never able to be

* Deuteronomy xxx. 15.
† Deuteronomy xxx. 20.
‡ Leviticu · x. 2.
§ Leviticus x. 3.
|| *Psalm cxiii. 25.*
¶ Genesis iv. 15.

extinguished; so that the lines of the poet may well be applied to wickedness—

> And she is of no mortal race,
> But an immortal foul disgrace.

Immortal, indeed, as to the life among us on earth, since with reference to the life with God it is lifeless and dead, and as some one has said, more worthless and odious than dung.

XII. But it was by all means necessary that different regions should be assigned to different things, the heaven to good things, the earth to what is evil; for the tendency of good is to soar on high, and if it ever comes down to us, for its Father is very bounteous, it still is very justly anxious to return again to heaven. But evil remains here, living at the greatest possible distance from the divine choir, always hovering around mortal life, and unable to die from among the human race. This, too, one of the most eminent among the men who have been admired for their wisdom has asserted, speaking in a magnificent strain in the Theætetus, where he says, "But it is impossible for evils to come to an end. For it is indispensable that there should always be something in opposition to God. And it is equally impossible that it should have its place in the divine regions; but it must of necessity hover around mortal nature and this place where we live; on which account we ought to endeavour to flee from this place as speedily as possible. And our flight will be a likening of ourselves to God, to the best of our power. And such a likening consists of being just and holy in conjunction with prudence."* Very naturally, therefore, Cain, the symbol of wickedness, will not die, for wickedness must of necessity be always alive in the mortal race of mankind; so that the expression, "to die the death," is not incorrectly spoken of the homicide, for the reasons which have here been given.

XIII. And the expression, "not intentionally, but if God deliver him into his hand," is used with exceeding propriety with reference to those who commit an unintentional homicide; for it seems to Moses here, that our intentional actions are the fruit of our own mind and will, but that our unintentional actions proceed from the will of God. I mean by this, not our sins, but, on the contrary, those things which are the

* Plato. Theætetus, p. 176.

punishment of our sins; for it is not becoming for God himself to inflict punishment, as being the first and most excellent Lawgiver; but he punishes by the ministry of others, and not by his own act. It is very suitable to his character that he himself should bestow his graces, and his free gifts, and his great benefits, inasmuch as he is by nature good and bountiful. But it is not fitting that he should inflict his punishments further than by his mere command, inasmuch as he is a king; but he must act in this by the instrumentality of others, who are suitable for such purposes.

And the practiser of virtue, Jacob, bears his testimony in support of this doctrine of mine, where he says, "The God who has nourished me from my youth up, the angel who delivered me from all my evils."* For the more ancient benefits, those by which the soul is nourished, he attributes to God, but the more recent ones, which are caused by the errors of the soul, he attributes to the servant of God. On this account, I imagine it is, that when Moses was speaking philosophically of the creation of the world, while he described every thing else as having been created by God alone, he mentions man alone as having been made by him in conjunction with other assistants; for, says Moses, "God said, Let us make man in our image."† The expression, "let *us* make," indicating a plurality of makers. Here, therefore, the Father is conversing with his own powers, to whom he has assigned the task of making the mortal part of our soul, acting in imitation of his own skill while he was fashioning the rational part within us, thinking it right that the dominant part within the soul should be the work of the Ruler of all things, but that the part which is to be kept in subjection should be made by those who are subject to him. And he made us of the powers which were subordinate to him, not only for the reason which has been mentioned, but also because the soul of man alone was destined to receive notions of good and of evil, and to choose one of the two, since it could not adopt both. Therefore, he thought it necessary to assign the origin of evil to other workmen than himself,—but to retain the generation of good for himself alone.

XIV. On which account, after Moses had already put in God's mouth this expression, "Let us make man," as if speaking to several persons, he adds, as if he were speaking only of

* *Genesis xlviii. 15.* † Genesis i. 26.

one, "God made man." For, in fact, the one God alone is the sole Creator of the real man, who is the purest mind; but a plurality of workmen are the makers of that which is called man, the being compounded of external senses; for which reason the especial real man is spoken of with the article; for the words of Moses are, "The God made the man;" that is to say, he made that reason destitute of species and free from all admixture. But he speaks of man in general without the addition of the article; for the expression, "Let us make man," shows that he means the being compounded of irrational and rational nature.

In accordance with this he has also not attributed the blessing of the virtuous and the cursing of the wicked to the same ministers, though both these offices receive praise. But since the blessing of the good has the precedence in panegyrics, and the affixing curses on the wicked is in the second rank of those who are appointed for these duties (and they are the chiefs, and leaders of the race, twelve in number, whom it is customary to call the patriarchs), he has assigned the better six, who are the best for the task of blessing, namely, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin; and the others he has appointed for the curses, namely, the first and last sons of Leah, Reuben, and Zabulon, and the four bastard sons by the handmaidens; for the chiefs of the royal tribe, and of the tribe consecrated to the priesthood, Judah and Levi, are reckoned in the former class.

Very naturally, therefore, does God give up those who have done deeds worthy of death to the hands of others for punishment, wishing to teach us that the nature of evil is banished to a distance from the divine choir, since even punishment, which, though a good, has in it some imitation of evil, is confirmed by others. And the expression, "I will give thee a place to which he who has slain a man unintentionally shall flee," appears to me to be spoken with exceeding propriety; for what he calls a place is not a region filled by the body, but is rather, in a figure, God himself, because he, surrounding all things, is not surrounded himself, and because he is that to which all things flee for refuge. It is proper, therefore, for him who appears to have been involuntarily changed to say that this change has come upon him by the divine will, just as it is not proper for him to say so who has done evil of his

own accord; and he says that he will give this place, not to him who has slain the man, but to him with whom he is conversing, so that the inhabitant of it shall be one person, but he who flees to it for refuge another; for God has given his own word a country to inhabit, namely, his own knowledge, as if it were a native of it. But to the man who is under the pollution of involuntary error he has given a foreign home as to a stranger, not a country as to a citizen.

XV. Having now said thus much in a philosophical spirit with respect to involuntary offences, he proceeds to legislate concerning the man who rises up to attack another, or who treacherously plots his death, saying, "But if any one attacks his neighbour so as to slay him by treachery, and he flees to God," that is to say to the place which has already been spoken of under a figure, from which life is given to all men. For he says also in another passage: "Whosoever shall flee thither shall live." But is not everlasting life a fleeing for refuge to the living God? and is not a fleeing from his presence death? But if anyone sets upon another, he by all means is committing iniquity by deliberate purpose, and that which is done with treachery is liable to be accounted among voluntary actions, just as, on the other hand, that which is done without treachery is not subject to blame. There is nothing therefore of the wicked actions which are done secretly, and treacherously, and of malice aforethought, which we can properly say are done through the will of God, but they are done only through our own will. For, as I have said before, the storehouses of wickedness are in us ourselves, and those of good alone are with God.

Whosoever therefore flees for refuge, that is to say, whosoever accuses not himself, but God as the cause of his offence, let him be punished, being deprived of that refuge to the altar which tends to salvation and security, and which is meant for suppliants alone. And is not this proper? For the altar is full of victims, in which there is no spot, I mean of innocent and thoroughly purified souls. But to pronounce the Deity the cause of evil is a spot which it is hard to cure, or rather which is altogether incurable.

Those who have cultivated such a disposition as to be lovers of themselves rather than lovers of God, may remain at a *distance from* the sacred places, in order that as polluted and

impure persons, they may not behold, not even from a distance, the sacred flame of the evil which is unextinguishably set on fire, and purified, and dedicated to God with entire and perfect power. Very beautifully, therefore, did one of the wise men of old, hastening on to this same conclusion, find confidence to say that "God is in no respect and in no place unjust, but he is the most righteous being possible. There is nothing that more nearly resembles him than the man who is as just as possible. Around is the strength, and the real ability, and power of man, and also nothingness and unmanliness. For the knowledge of him is wisdom and true virtue; but the ignorance of him is real ignorance and manifest wickedness. And all other things which appear to be cleverness or wisdom, if they be displayed in political affairs are troublesome, and if in acts, are sordid.*

XVI. Therefore, having further commanded the unholy man who is a speaker of evil against divine things to be removed from the most holy places and to be given up to punishment, he proceeds to say, "Whosoever hateth his father or his mother, let him die."† And in a similar strain he says, "He who accuseth his father or his mother, let him die." He here all but cries out and shouts that there is no pardon whatever to be given to those who blaspheme the Deity. For if they who bring accusations against their mortal parents are led away to death, what punishment must we think that those men deserve who venture to blaspheme the Father and Creator of the universe? And what accusation can be more disgraceful than to say that the origin of evil is not in us but in God? Drive away, therefore, drive away, O ye who have been initiated in, and who are the hierophants of, the sacred mysteries, drive away, I say, the souls which are mixed and in a confused crowd, and brought together promiscuously from all quarters, those unpurified and still polluted souls, which have their ears not closed, and their tongues unrestrained, and which bear about all the instruments of their misery ready prepared, in order that they may hear all things, even those which it is not lawful to hear. But they who have been instructed in the difference between voluntary and involuntary offences, and who have received a tongue which speaketh good things instead of one which delighteth in accusation, when they do right are to be praised, and when they err contrary to

* Plato. Theætetus, p. 176. † Exodus xxi. 15.

their intention, they are not greatly to be blamed, for which reason cities have been set apart for them to flee unto for refuge.

XVII. And it is worth while to examine with all the accuracy possible into some necessary points relating to this place. They are four in number. One, why it is that the cities which were set apart for the fugitives were not chosen out of those cities which the other tribes received as their portion, but only out of those which were assigned to the tribe of Levi. The second point is, why they were six in number, and neither more nor fewer. The third is, why three of them were beyond Jordan, and the other three in the land of the Canaanites. The fourth is, why the death of the high priest was appointed to the fugitives as a limit, after which they might return. We must, therefore, say what is suitable on each of these heads, beginning with the first in order.

It is with exceeding propriety that the command is given to flee only to those cities which had been assigned to the tribe of Levi; for the Levites themselves are in a manner fugitives, inasmuch as they, for the sake of pleasing God, have left parents, and children, and brethren, and all their mortal relations. Therefore the original leader of this company is represented as saying to his father and mother, "I have not seen you, and my brethren I do not know, and my sons I disown,"* in order to be able to serve the living God without allowing any opposite attraction to draw him away. But real flight is a deprivation of all that is nearest and dearest to a man. And it introduces one fugitive to another, so as to make them forget what they have done by reason of the similarity of their actions. Either, therefore, it is for this reason alone, or perhaps for this other also, that the Levitical tribe of the persons set apart for the service of the temple ran up, and at one onset slew those who had made a god of the golden calf, the pride of Egypt, killing all who had arrived at the age of puberty, being inflamed with righteous anger, combined with enthusiasm, and a certain heaven-sent inspiration: "And every one slew his brother, and his neighbour, and him that was nearest to him."† The body being the brother of the soul, and the irrational part the neighbour of the rational, and the uttered speech that which is nearest to the mind.

* *Deuteronomy xxxiii. 9.* † Exodus xxxii. 26.

For by the following means alone can that which is most excellent within us become adapted for and inclined to the service of him who is the most excellent of all existing beings. In the first place, if man be resolved into soul, the body, which is akin to it as a brother, being separated and cut off from it, and also all its insatiable desires; and in the second place when the soul has, as I have already said, cast off the irrational part, which is the neighbour of the rational part; for this, like a torrent, being divided into five channels, excites the impetuosity of the passions through all the external senses, as so many aqueducts. Then, in regular order, the reason removes to a distance and separates the uttered speech which appeared to be the nearest to it of all things, in order that speech, according to the intention, might alone be left, free from the body, free from the entanglements of the outward senses, and free from all uttered speech; for when it is left in this manner existing in a solitary manner, it will embrace that which alone is to be embraced with purity, and in such a way that it cannot be drawn away.

In addition to what has been said above, we must also mention this point, that the tribe of Levi is the tribe of the ministers of the temple and of the priests, to whom the service and ministration of holy things is assigned; and they also perform sacred service who have committed unintentional homicide, since, according to Moses, "God gives into their hands"* those who have done things worthy of death, with a view to their execution. But it is the duty of the one body to know the good, and of the other body to chastise the wicked.

XVIII. These then are the reasons on account of which they who have committed unintentional homicide fly only to those cities which belong to the ministers of the temple. We must now proceed to mention what these cities are, and why they are six in number. Perhaps we may say that the most ancient, and the strongest, and the most excellent metropolis, for I may not call it merely a city, is the divine word, to flee to which first is the most advantageous course of all. But the other five, being as it were colonies of that one, are the powers of Him who utters the word, the chief of which is his creative power, according to which the Creator made the world with a

* Exodus xxi. 31.

word; the second is his kingly power, according to which he who has created rules over what is created; the third is his merciful power, in respect of which the Creator pities and shows mercy towards his own work; the fourth is his legislative power, by which he forbids what may not be done.

* * * * *

And these are very beautiful and most excellently fenced cities, the best possible refuge for souls which are worthy to be saved for ever; and the establishment of them is merciful and humane, calculated to excite men, to aid and to encourage them in good hopes.

Who else could more greatly display the exceeding abundance of his mercy, of all the powers which are able to benefit us, towards such an exceeding variety of persons who err by unintentional misdeeds, and who have neither the same strength nor the same weakness? Therefore he exhorts him who is able to run swiftly to strain onwards, without stopping to take breath, to the highest word of God, which is the fountain of wisdom, in order that by drinking of that stream he may find everlasting life instead of death. But he urges him who is not so swift of foot to flee for refuge to the creative power which Moses calls God, since it is by that power that all things were made and arranged; for to him who comprehends that everything has been created, that comprehension alone, and the knowledge of the Creator, is a great acquisition of good, which immediately persuades the creature to love him who created it. Him, again, who is still less ready he bids flee to his kingly power; for that which is in subjection is corrected by the fear of him who rules it, and by necessity which keeps it in order, even if the child is not kept in the right way by love for his father.

Again, in the case of him who is not able to reach the boundaries which have been already mentioned, in respect of their being a long way off, there are other goals appointed for them at a shorter distance, the cities namely of the necessary powers, the city of the power of the mercy, the city of the power which enjoins what is right, the city of the power which forbids what is not right: for he who is already persuaded that the Deity is not implacable, but is merciful by reason of the gentleness of his nature, then, even if he has previously *sinned, subsequently repents* from a hope of pardon. And he who

has adopted the notion that God is a lawgiver obeys all the injunctions which as such he imposes, and so will be happy; and he who is last of all will find the last refuge, namely, the escape from evil, even though he may not be able to arrive at a participation in the more desirable good things.

XIX. These, then, are the six cities which Moses calls cities of refuge, five of which have had their figures set forth in the sacred scriptures, and their images are there likewise. The images of the cities of command and prohibition are the laws in the ark; that of the merciful power of God is the covering of the ark, and he calls it the mercy-seat. The images of the creative power and of the kingly power are the winged cherubim which are placed upon it. But the divine word which is above these does not come into any visible appearance, inasmuch as it is not like to any of the things that come under the external senses, but is itself an image of God, the most ancient of all the objects of intellect in the whole world, and that which is placed in the closest proximity to the only truly existing God, without any partition or distance being interposed between them: for it is said, "I will speak unto thee from above the mercy-seat, in the midst, between the two cherubim."* So that the word is, as it were, the charioteer of the powers, and he who utters it is the rider, who directs the charioteer how to proceed with a view to the proper guidance of the universe.

Therefore, he who is so far removed from committing any intentional misdeeds, that he is even free from all unintentional offence, will have God himself for his inheritance, and will dwell in him alone. But those who fall into errors which proceed not from wilful purpose, but which are done without premeditation, will have the aforesaid places of refuge in all abundance and fulness.

Now of the cities of refuge there are three on the other side of Jordan, which are at a great distance from our race. What cities are they? The word of the Governor of the universe, and his creative power, and his kingly power: for to these belong the heaven and the whole world. But those which, as it were, participate in us, and which are near to us, and which almost touch the unfortunate race of mankind which is alone capable of sinning, are the three on this side of the river; the

* Exodus xxv. 22.

merciful power, the power which enjoins what is to be done, the power which prohibits what ought not to be done: for these powers touch us. For what need can there be of prohibition to persons who are not likely to do wrong? And what need of injunction to people who are not by nature inclined to stumble? And what need of mercy can those persons have who will absolutely never do wrong at all? But our race of mankind has need of all these things because it is by nature inclined and liable to offences both voluntary and involuntary.

XX. The fourth and last of the points which we proposed to discuss, is the appointing as a period for the return of the fugitives the death of the high priest, which, if taken in the literal sense, causes me great perplexity; for a very unequal punishment is imposed by this enactment on those who have done the very same things, since some will be in banishment for a longer time, and others for a shorter time; for some of the high priests live to a very old age, and others die very early, and some are appointed while young men, and others not until they are old. And again of those who are convicted of unintentional homicide, some have been banished at the beginning of the high priest's entrance into office, and some when the high priest has been at the very point of death. So that some are deprived of their country for a very long time, and others suffer the same infliction only for a day, if it chance to be so; after which they lift up their heads, and exult, and so return among those whose nearest relations have been slain by them.

This difficult and scarcely explicable perplexity we may escape if we adopt the inner and allegorical explanation in accordance with natural philosophy. For we say that the high priest is not a man, but is the word of God, who has not only no participation in intentional errors, but none even in those which are involuntary. For Moses says that he cannot be defiled neither in respect of his father, that is, the mind, nor of his mother, that is, the external sense;* because, I imagine, he has received imperishable and wholly pure parents, God being his father, who is also the father of all things, and wisdom being his mother, by means of whom the universe arrived at creation; and also because he is anointed with oil, by which I mean that the principal part of him is illuminated

* *Leviticus* xxi. 11.

with a light like the beams of the sun, so as to be thought worthy to be clothed with garments.

And the most ancient word of the living God is clothed with the word as with a garment, for it has put on earth, and water, and air, and fire, and the things which proceed from these elements. But the particular soul is clothed with the body, and the mind of the wise man is clothed with the virtues. And it is said that he will never take the mitre off from his head, he will never lay aside the kingly diadem, the symbol of an authority which is not indeed absolute, but only that of a viceroy, but which is nevertheless an object of admiration. Nor will he "rend his clothes;" for the word of the living God being the bond of every thing, as has been said before, holds all things together, and binds all the parts, and prevents them from being loosened or separated.

And the particular soul, as far as it has received power, does not permit any of the parts of the body to be separated or cut off contrary to their nature; but as far as depends upon itself, it preserves every thing entire, and conducts the different parts to a harmony and indissoluble union with one another. But the mind of the wise man being thoroughly purified, preserves the virtues in an unbroken and unimpaired condition, having adapted their natural kindred and communion with a still more solid good will.

XXI. This high priest, as Moses says, "shall not enter into any soul that is dead." But the death of the soul is a life according to wickedness: so that he must never touch any pollution such as folly is fond of dealing with. And to him also "a virgin of the sacred race is joined;" that is to say, an opinion for ever pure, and undefiled, and imperishable; for he "may never become the husband of a widow, or of one who has been divorced, or of one who is a profane person, or of one who is a harlot," since he is always proclaiming an endless and irreconcileable war against them. For it is a hateful thing to him to be widowed with respect to virtue, and to be divorced and driven away by her; and in like manner all persuasion of this kind is profane and unholy.

But that promiscuous evil abandoned to many husbands, and to the worship of many gods, that is, a harlot, he does not think fit even to look upon, being content with her who has chosen for herself one husband and father only, the all-govern-

ing God. There is a certain extravagance of perfection visible in this disposition. He has known* the man who has vowed the great vow in some instances offending unintentionally, even if not of deliberate purpose; for he says, "But if any one die before him suddenly, he shall be at once polluted." For if of things without deliberation anything coming from without strikes down suddenly, such things do at once pollute the soul, but not with a pollution which remains for any length of time, inasmuch as they are unintentional actions. And about these actions the high priest (standing above them, as he also does above those which are voluntary) is indifferent.

But I am not saying this at random, but for the sake of proving that the period of the death of the high priest is a most natural termination of exile to be appointed by the law, so as to allow of the return of the fugitives. As long, therefore, as this most sacred word lives and survives in the soul, it is impossible for any involuntary error to enter into it; for it is by nature so framed as to have no participation in, and to be incapable of admitting any kind of error. But if it dies (not meaning by this that it is itself destroyed, but that it is separated from our soul), then a return is at once granted to intentional offences. For if while the word remained and was healthy in us, error was driven to a distance, by all means, when the word departs, error will be introduced. For the undefiled high priest, conscience, has derived from nature this most especial honour, that no error of the mind can find any place within him; on which account it is worth our while to pray that the high priest may live in the soul, being at the same time both a judge and a convictor, who having received jurisdiction over the whole of our minds, is not altered in his appearance or purpose by any of those things which are brought under his judgment.

XXII. Having now, therefore, said what was proper on the subject of fugitives, we will proceed with what follows in the regular order of the context. In the first place it is said, "The angel of the Lord found her in the way,"† pitying the soul which out of modesty had voluntarily committed the

* There is some obscurity in the sense here. Mangey proposes instead of οἶδέ που, to read οὐδέπου, but it does not seem any more intelligible than that in the text.

† *Genesis xvi. 7.*

danger of wandering about, and very nearly becoming a conductor of her return to opinion void of error. It is desirable also not to pass over in silence the things which are said in a philosophical strain by the lawgiver on the subject of discovery and investigation; for he represents some persons as neither investigating nor discovering anything, others as succeeding in both these paths, others as having chosen only one of them; of which last class some who seek do not find, and others find without having sought.

Those, then, who have no desire for either discovery or investigation have shamefully debased their reason by ignorance and indifference, and though they had it in their power to see acutely, they have become blind. Thus he says that "Lot's wife turning backwards became a pillar of salt;"* not here inventing a fable, but pointing out the proper nature of the event.

For whoever despises his teacher, and under the influence of an innate and habitual indolence forsakes what is in front of him, by means of which it may be in his power to see, and to hear, and to exert his other powers, so as to form a judgment in things of nature, and turns his head round so as to keep his eyes on what is behind him, that man has an admiration for blindness in the affairs of life, as well as in the parts of the body, and becomes a pillar, like a lifeless and senseless stone. For, as Moses says, "such men have not hearts to understand, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear,"† but make the whole of their life blind, and deaf, and senseless and mutilated in every respect, so as not to be worth living, caring for none of those matters which deserve their attention.

XXIII. And the leader of this company is the king of the region of the body. "For," says Moses, "Pharaoh turned himself about and went into his house, and did not set his heart to this thing either,"‡ which statement is equivalent to, he did not take notice of anything whatever, but allowed himself to become dried up like a plant which has no care taken of it by the farmer, and to lose his fertility and become barren. Those then who take counsel, and consider matters, and who investigate everything carefully, sharpen and rouse their minds: and the mind being duly exercised bears its appropriate fruit of cleverness and intelligence, by means of which

* Genesis xix. 26 † Deut. xxix. 4. ‡ Exodus vii. 23.

the power of repelling all deceitful things is acquired. But the man who is an enemy to consideration blunts and breaks the edges of his wisdom; we must therefore discard the truly senseless and lifeless company of such men as these, and choose those who exert their powers of consideration and discovery.

And presently the political disposition is introduced, which, without being at all over ambitious of glory, has a desire for that better generation, which the virtues have received as their inheritance, and which consequently seeks and finds it; for, says the scripture, "A man found Joseph in the plain, and asked him saying, What seekest thou; and he said, I am seeking my brothers; tell me where they are feeding their flocks: and the man said unto him, They are departed from hence; for I heard them saying, Let us go into Dothan; and Joseph went after his brethren and found them in Dothan."* The name Dothan is interpreted, "a sufficient abandonment," being a symbol of the soul which has in no slight degree but altogether escaped those vain opinions, which resemble the pursuits of women rather than those of men. On which account virtue, that is Sarah, is very beautifully described as having given up "the manner of women,"† which is the object of pursuit to those men who live an unmanly and truly feminine life. But the wise man is also "added when leaving,"‡ according to Moses, speaking most strictly in accordance with nature. For the deprivation of empty opinion must necessarily be the addition of true opinion.

But if any one, passing his days in a mortal, and promiscuous, and variously formed life, and having abundant resources of wealth and riches, considers and inquires concerning that better generation which looks only to what is good, he is worthy of being received, if the dreams and visions of those things, which are fancied to be and which appear to be good, do not again overwhelm him and immerse him in luxury. For if he abides in contemplation of the soul without any adulteration, proceeding and following in the track of the things which he is seeking, he will never give up his search till he has attained to the objects of his wishes; but he will find none of the things which he desires among the wicked. Why not? Because they departed from hence. Having abandoned the studies of our friends they have changed their

* *Genesis xxxvii. 15.* † *Genesis* xviii. 11. ‡ Genesis xxv. 17.

abode from the country of the pious, and settled in the desert of the wicked. But the real man, the convictor that dwells in the soul says this, who when he sees the soul in perplexity, and considering and investigating deeply, exerts a prudent care in its behalf, that it may not wander and so miss the right road.

XXIV. I very greatly wonder at those persons also, I mean at him who is fond of asking questions about what is in the middle between two extremes, and who says, "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"* And also at him who answers, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering," and who afterwards finds what is given as a ransom; "For behold a single ram was caught by his horns in a shrub of Sabec." Let us therefore consider what it is that he who is seeking doubts about, and what he who answers reveals, and in the third place what the thing is which was found.

Now what the inquirer asks is something of this kind:—Behold the efficient cause, the fire; behold also the passive part, the material, the wood. Where is the third party, the thing to be effected? As if he said,—Behold the mind, the fervid and kindled spirit; behold also the objects of intelligence, as it were so much material or fuel; where is the third thing, the act of perceiving? Or, again,—Behold the sight, behold the colour, where is the act of seeing? And, in short, generally, behold the external sense, behold the thing to be judged of; but where are the objects of the external sense, the material, the exertion of the feeling? To him who puts these questions, answer is very properly made, "God will provide for himself." For the third thing is the peculiar work of God; for it is owing to his providential arrangement that the mind comprehends, and the sight sees, and that every external sense is exerted. "And a ram is found caught by his horns;" that is to say, reason is found silent and withholding its assent; for silence is the most excellent of offerings, and so is a withholding of assent to those matters of which there are not clear proofs; therefore this is all that ought to be said, "God will provide for himself,"—he to whom all things are known, who illuminates the universe by the most brilliant of all lights, himself. But the other things are not to be said by creatures

* Genesis xxii. 7.

over whom great darkness is poured; but quiet is a means of safety in darkness.

XXV. Those also who have inquired what it is that nourishes the soul, for as Moses says, "They knew not what it was," learnt at last and found that it was the word of God and the divine reason, from which flow all kinds of instinctive and everlasting wisdom. This is the heavenly nourishment which the holy scripture indicates, saying, in the character of the cause of all things, "Behold I rain upon you bread from heaven;"* for in real truth it is God who showers down heavenly wisdom from above upon all the intellects which are properly disposed for the reception of it, and which are fond of contemplation. But those who have seen and tasted it, are exceedingly delighted with it, and understand indeed what they feel, but do not know what the cause is which has affected them; and on this account they inquire, "What is this which is sweeter than honey and whiter than snow?" And they will be taught by the interpreter of the divine will, that "This is the bread which the Lord has given them to eat."†

What then is this bread? Tell us. "This," says he, "is the word which the Lord has appointed." This divine appointment at the same time both illuminates and sweetens the soul, which is endowed with sight, shining upon it with the beams of truth, and sweetening with the sweet virtue of persuasion those who thirst and hunger after excellence. And the prophet also having himself inquired what was the cause of meeting with success, finds it to be associated with the only God; for when he was doubting and asking, Who am I, and what am I, that I shall deliver the seeing race of Israel from the disposition hostile to God, which seems to be a king? He is taught by the oracle that, "I will be with thee." And, indeed, inquiries into individual matters have a certain elegant and philosophical kind of meditation in them; for how can they avoid it? But the inquiry into the nature of God, the most excellent of all things, who is incomparable, and the cause of all things, at once delights those who betake themselves to its consideration, and it is not imperfect inasmuch as he, out of his own merciful nature, comes forward to meet it, displaying himself by his virgin graces, and willingly to all those who are desirous to see him. Not, indeed, such as he is, for that

* *Exodus xvi. 4.* † Exodus xvi. 15.

is impossible, since Moses also turned away his face,* for he feared to see God face to face; but as far as it is possible for created nature to approach by its own power those things which are only discernible to the mind. And this also is written among the hortatory precepts, for, says Moses, "Ye shall turn unto the Lord your God, and shall find him, when ye seek him with all your heart, and with all your soul."†

XXVI. Having now spoken at sufficient length on this point also, let us proceed in regular order to consider the third head of our subject, in which the seeking existed, but the finding did not follow it. At all events Laban, who examined the entire spiritual house of the practiser of virtue, "did not," as Moses says, "find the images,"‡ for it was full of real things, and not of dreams and vain fantasies. Nor did the inhabitants of Sodom, blind in their minds, who were insanely eager to defile the holy and unpolluted reasonings, "find the road which led to this"§ object; but, as the sacred scriptures tell us, they were wearied with their exertions to find the door, although they ran in a circle all round the house, and left no stone unturned for the accomplishment of their unnatural and impious desires.

And before now some persons, wishing to be kings instead of doorkeepers, and to put an end to the most beautiful thing in life, namely order, having not only failed in obtaining the success which they hoped to meet with through injustice, but have even been compelled to part with that which they had in their hands; for the law tells us that the companions of Korah, who coveted the priesthood, lost both what they wished for and what they had: for as children and men do not learn the same things, but there are institutions adapted to each age, so also there are by nature some souls which are always childish, even though they are in bodies which have grown old; and on the other hand, there are some which have arrived at complete perfection in bodies which are still in the prime and vigour of early youth.

But those men will deservedly incur the imputation of folly who desire objects too great for their own nature, since everything which is beyond one's power will vanish away through the intensity of its own vehemence. And so Pharaoh also,

* Exodus iii. 6.
† Deuteronomy iv. 29.
‡ Genesis xxxi. 33.
§ Genesis xix. 11.

when "seeking to kill Moses,"* the prophetic race, will never find him, although he has heard that a heavy accusation is brought against him, as if he has attempted to destroy all the supreme authority of the body by two attacks, the first of which he made upon the Egyptian disposition, which was fortifying pleasure as a citadel against the soul; for "having smote him," with an accidental instrument that came to hand, "he buried him in the sand,"† thinking that the two doctrines, of pleasure being the first and greatest good, and of atoms being the origin of the universe, both proceed from the same source.

The second attack he made upon him who was cutting into small pieces the nature of the good, and assigning one portion to the soul, another to the body, and another to external circumstances; for he wishes the good to be entire, being assigned to the best thing in us, the intellect alone, as its inheritance, and not being adapted to anything inanimate.

XXVII. Nor does he, who is sent forth to search for that virtue which is invincible and embittered against the ridiculous pursuits of men, by name Tamar, find her. And this failure of his is strictly in accordance with nature; for we read in the scripture, "And Judah sent a kid in the hands of his shepherd, the Adullamite, to receive back his pledge from the woman, and he found her not: and he asked the men of the place, Where is the harlot who was in Ænan by the wayside? and they said, There is no harlot in this place. And he returned back to Judah, and said unto him, I have not found her, and the men of the place say that there is no harlot there. And Judah said, Let her keep the things, only let me not be made a laughing-stock, I because I have sent the kid, and you because you have not found her."‡ Oh, the admirable trial! oh, the temptation becoming sacred things! Who gave the pledge? Why the mind, forsooth, which was eager to purchase the most excellent possession, piety towards God, by three pledges or symbols, namely a ring, and an armlet, and a staff, signifying confidence and sure faith; the connection and union of reason with life, and of life with reason; and upright and unchanging instruction on which it is profitable to rely. Therefore he examines the question as to whether he had properly given this pledge. What, then, is

* Exodus ii. 15. † Exodus ii. 12. ‡ Genesis xxxviii. 20.

the examination? to throw down some bait having an attractive power, such as glory, or riches, or bodily health, or something similar, and to see to which it will incline, like the balance in a scale; for if there is any inclination to any one of these things the pledge is not sure. Therefore he sent a kid in order to recover back his pledge from the woman, not because he had determined by all means to recover it, but only in the case of her being unworthy to retain it. And when will this be? when she willingly exchanges what is of importance for what is indifferent, preferring spurious to genuine good.

Now the genuine good things are faith, the connection and union of words with deeds, and the rule of right instruction, as on the other hand the evils are, faithlessness, a want of such connection between words and deeds, and ignorance. And spurious goods are those which depend upon appetite devoid of reason; for "when he sought her he did not find her;" for what is good is hard to be found, or, one may even say, is utterly impossible to be found in a confused life. And if one inquires whether the soul, which is a harlot, is in every place of virtue, one will be distinctly told that it is not, and that it has not been previously; for a common, unchaste, and wanton, and utterly shameless woman, selling the flower of her beauty at a low price, and making her external parts both bright with purifications and washings, but leaving her inward parts unclean and vile, and being like pictures painted with colours about the face because of the absence of all natural beauty; she who pursues that promiscuous evil called the vice of having many husbands, as if it were a good, coveting polygamy, and laying herself open for infinite variety, and being mocked and insulted at the same time by ten thousand bodies and things, "is not there."

He, then, who sent the messenger to inquire, hearing this, having removed envy to a distance from himself, and being gentle in his nature, rejoices in no moderate degree, and says, "Perhaps, then, according to my prayer, she is truly a virtuous mind, a citizen wife, excelling in modesty, and chastity, and all other virtues, cleaving to one husband alone, being content with the administration of one household, and rejoicing in the authority of one husband; and if she is such an one, let her keep what I have given her—the instruction and

the connection of reason with life and of life with reason, and, what is the most necessary of all things, surety and faith. But let us not be laughed at as appearing to have given gifts which were not merited, while we think that we gave what is most suitable to the soul; for I, indeed, did what was proper for a man to do who wished to make experiment of and to test her disposition, throwing out a bait and sending a messenger; but he has showed me that her nature is not easily caught. And it is not clear to me why it is not easily caught; for I have seen ten thousand persons of the extremely wicked class doing the same things as those who are extremely good, but not with the same purpose, since the one class has truth and the other only hypocrisy, and it is very hard to distinguish the one from the other, for very often reality is overpowered by appearance.

XXVIII. Also the person who loves virtue seeks a goat by reason of his sins, but does not find one; for, already, as the sacred scripture tells us, "it has been burnt."* Now we must consider what is intimated under this figurative expression—how never to do any thing wrong is the peculiar attribute of God; and to repent is the part of a wise man. But this is very difficult and very hard to attain to. Accordingly the scripture says that "Moses sought and sought again" a reason for repentance for his sins in mortal life; for he was very anxious to find a soul which was stripped of sin, and coming forward naked of all offence without shame. But nevertheless he did not find one, the flame, I mean by this the very quickly moving irrational desire, rushing inwards and devouring the whole soul.

For what is smaller in numbers is usually overpowered by what is more numerous, and what is slower by what is more speedy, and what is to come hereafter by what is present. Now what is contracted in quantity, and slow, and future, is repentance; what is numerous, and swift, and continuous in human life is, iniquity. Very naturally, therefore, when any one falls into error, he says that he is unable to eat of what is offered by reason of his sins, so that his conscience will not permit him to be nourished by repentance; on which account it is said in the scripture, "Moses heard, and it pleased him."† For the things which relate to the creature are very

* Leviticus x. 16. † Leviticus xvi. 20.

far removed from the things which relate to God; for to the creature only those things which are visible are known, but to God, even those things also which are invisible. And that man is crazy who, speaking falsely instead of truly, while still committing iniquity, asserts that he has repented. It is like as if one who had a disease were to pretend that he was in good health; for he, as it seems, will only get more sick, since he does not choose to apply any of the remedies which are conducive to health.

XXIX. On one occasion Moses was urged on, by a desire of learning, to investigate the causes through which the most necessary of the things in the world are brought to perfection; for seeing how many things come to an end, and are produced afresh in creation, being again destroyed, and again abiding, he marvelled, and was amazed, and cried out, saying, "The bush (βάτος) burns, and is not consumed.'* For he does not trouble his head about the inaccessible (ἄβατος) country as being the abode of divine natures. But now that he is about to undertake a labour which will have no success and no end, he is relieved by the mercy and providence of God, the Saviour of all men, who has given warning out of his holy shrine, "Do not approach near this place," which is equivalent to, Do not approach this consideration; for it is a business requiring more labour, and more energy, and care, and fondness for investigation than can be suited to human power. But be content with admiring what is created; and do not be over-curious about the causes why each thing is created or destroyed.

"For the place," says God, "on which thou standest is holy ground."† What kind of place is that? Is it not plain that it is that which relates to the principles of causes, which is the only one that he has adapted to the divine natures, not thinking any more competent to aim at a clear understanding of the principles of causes? But he who, out of his desire for learning, has raised his head above the whole world begins to inquire concerning the Creator of the world who this being is who is so difficult to see and whose nature it is so difficult to conjecture, whether he is a body, or an incorporeal being, or something above these things, or whether he is a simple nature like a unit, or a compound being or any ordinary existing thing. And when he sees how difficult to ascertain, and how

* Exodus iii. 2. † Exodus iii. 5.

difficult to understand this is, he then prays to be allowed to learn from God himself who God is; for he has never hoped to be able to learn this from any other of the beings that are around him. But nevertheless, though inquiring into the essence of the living God he has heard nothing. For, says God, "thou shalt see my back parts, but my face thou shalt not behold."* For it is sufficient for the wise man to know the consequences, and the things which are after God; but he who wishes to see the principal essence will be blinded by the exceeding brilliancy of his rays before he can see it.

XXX. Having now said thus much concerning the third head of our subject, we will proceed to the fourth and last of the propositions we proposed to examine, according to which discovery sometimes comes to meet us without there having been any search. To this order belongs every self-taught and self-instructed wise man; for such an one has not been improved by consideration, and care, and labour, but from the first moment of his birth he has found wisdom ready prepared and showered upon him from above from heaven, of which he drinks an unmixed draught and on which he feasts, and continues being intoxicated with a sober intoxication with correctness of reason. This is the man whom the law calls Isaac, whom the soul did not conceive at one time and bring forth at another, for says the scripture, "having conceived him she brought him forth,"† as if without any consideration of time.

For it was not a man who was now being thus brought forth, but a conception of the purest character, beautiful rather in its nature than in consequence of any study; for which reason also she who brings him forth is said to have given up the usual manner of women, that is to say her usual, and reasonable, and human customs. For the self-taught race is something new, and beyond any description, and truly divine, existing not by any human conceptions, but by some inspired frenzy. Are you ignorant that the Hebrews stand in no need of midwives for their delivery? But they, as Moses says, "bring forth before the midwives can arrive," by which is meant that they have nature alone for a coadjutor, without having any need of methods, or arts, or sciences.

And Moses gives very beautiful and very natural definitions of what is taught a man by himself: one being such a thing

* *Exodus* xxxiii. 23. † Genesis xxi. 2.

as is speedily discovered, the other what God himself has given us; accordingly, that which is taught by others requires a long time, but what is taught a man by himself is quick, and in a manner independent of time. And the one again has God for its expounder, but the other has man. Now the first definition he has placed in the question, "What is this that thou has found so quickly, O my son?"* But the other is contained in the answer to this question, "What the Lord God gave unto me."

XXXI. There is also a third definition of what is taught a man by himself, namely that which of its own accord rises upwards. For it is said in the hortatory injunctions, "Ye shall not sow, neither shall ye reap those things which arise from the earth of their own accord." †

For nature has no need of any art since God himself sows those things, and by his agricultural skill brings to perfection, as if they grew of themselves, things which do not grow of themselves, except inasmuch as they stand in need of no human assistance whatever. But this is not so much a positive exhortation as an announcement of his opinion, for if he had been giving a positive recommendation he would have said, "Do not sow, and do not reap:" but as he is only giving his opinion, he says, "Ye shall not sow, neither shall ye reap." For as to those things with which we meet by the voluntary bounty of nature, of these we cannot find either the beginnings or the ends in ourselves as if we were the causes of them: therefore the beginning is the seed-time and the end the harvest time. And it is better to understand these things thus: every beginning and every end is spontaneous, that is to say, it is the work of nature and not of ourselves. For instance; what is the beginning of learning. It is plain that it is a nature in the person who is taught which is well calculated to receive the particular subjects of meditation submitted to him. Again what is the beginning of being made perfect? If we are to speak plainly without keeping anything back, it is nature. Therefore he who teaches is also indeed to effect improvement, but it is God alone, the most excellent nature of all, who is able to conduct one to supreme perfection.

He who is bred up among such doctrines as these has everlasting peace, and is released from wearisome and endless

* *Genesis* xxvii. 20. † Genesis xxv. 11

labours. And according to the lawgiver there is no difference between peace and a week; for in each creation lays aside the appearance of energising and rests. Very properly, therefore, si it said, "And the sabbath of the law shall be food for you," speaking figuratively. For the only thing which is really nourishing and really enjoyable is rest in God; which confers the greatest good, undisturbed peace. Peace, therefore, among cities is mixed up with civil war; but the peace of the soul has no mixture in it of any kind of difference.

And the lawgiver appears to me to be recommending most manifestly that kind of discovery which is not preceded by any search. in the following words, "When the Lord thy God shall lead thee into the land which he swore to thy fathers that he would give to thee, large and beautiful cities which thou buildedst not, houses full of all good things which thou filledst not, cisterns hewn out of the quarries which thou hewedst not, vineyards and olive gardens which thou plantedst not."* You see here the ungrudging abundance of all the great blessings which are ready, and poured forth for man's possession and enjoyment. And the generic virtues are here likened to cities, because they are of the most comprehensive kind; and the specific virtues are likened to houses, because they are contracted into a narrower circle; and the souls of a good disposition are likened to cisterns, which are well inclined to receive wisdom, as the cisterns are calculated to receive water; and the improvement, and growth, and production of fruit, are compared to vineyards and olive gardens; and the fruit of knowledge is a life of contemplation, which produces unmixed joy, equal to that which proceeds from wine, and a light appreciable only by the intellect, as if from a flame of which oil is the nourishment.

XXXII. Having now said thus much on the subject of discovery, we will proceed in due order to what comes next in the context. Moses proceeds. "Therefore the angel of the Lord found her sitting by a fountain of water." Now a fountain is spoken of in many senses; in one manner our mind is meant by a fountain, in another the rational habit and instruction; in a third sense a bad disposition is intitimated; in a fourth sense a good disposition, the contrary of the preceding; in a fifth sense, the Creator and Father of the *universe* is himself thus spoken of in a figure; and there are

* *Deuteronomy* vi. 10.

passages written in the sacred scriptures which give proofs of these things. What they are we must now consider. Now in the very beginning of the history of the law there is a passage to the following effect: "And a fountain went up from the earth, and watered all the face of the earth."* Those men, then, who are not initiated in allegory and in the nature which loves to hide itself, liken the fountain here mentioned to the river of Egypt, which every year overflows and makes all the adjacent plains a lake, almost appearing to exhibit a power imitating and equal to that of heaven; for what the heaven during winter bestows on other countries, the Nile affords to Egypt at the height of summer; for the heaven sends rain from above upon the earth, but the river, raining upward from below, which seems a most paradoxical statement, irrigates the corn-fields.

And it is starting from this point that Moses has described the Egyptian disposition as an atheistical one, because it values the earth above the heaven, and the things of the earth above the things of heaven, and the body above the soul; but, however, we shall have an opportunity of speaking on these subjects hereafter when occasion permits.

But at present, for we must study not to be too prolix, we had better have recourse to an explanation which may be drawn from looking on the words as used figuratively; and we may say that the meaning of the statement that "a fountain went up and watered all the face of the earth," is something of this kind. The dominant part of us, like a fountain, pours forth many powers through the veins of the earth as it were, till they reach the organs of the external senses, that is to say, the eyes, and ears, and nostrils, and other organs; and these organs in every animal are situated about the head and face. Therefore, the face, which is the dominant portion of the body, is irrigated as from a fountain from the dominant portion of the soul; making the spirit, which is calculated for seeing, reach to the eyes, that which has the power of hearing reach the ears, the spirit of smelling reach the nostrils, that of taste the mouth, and causing that of touch to pervade the whole surface of the body.

XXXIII. There are also many various fountains of instruction, by means of which most nutritious reasonings have sprung up like the trunks of palm-trees; "for," says Moses,

* Genesis ii. 6.

"they came to Aileim, and in Aileim there were twelve fountains of water and seventy trunks of palm-trees. And they pitched their tents there by the side of the water."* The name Aileim is interpreted to mean "vestibules," a symbol of the approach to virtue. For as vestibules are the beginning of a house, so also are the encyclical preliminary branches of instruction the beginning of virtue, and twelve is the perfect number, of which the circle of the zodiac in the heaven is a witness, studded as it is with such numbers of brilliant constellations. The periodical revolution of the sun is another witness, for he accomplishes his circle in twelve months, and men also reckon the hours of the day and of the night as equal in number to the months of the year, and the passages are not few in which Moses celebrates this number, describing the twelve tribes of his nation, appointing by law the offering of the twelve cakes of shewbread, and ordering twelve stones, on which inscriptions are engraved, to be woven into the sacred robe of the garment, reaching down to the feet of the high-priest, on his oracular dress.

He also celebrates the number seven, multiplied by the number ten; at one time speaking of the seventy palm-trees by the fountains, and in other passages he speaks of the elders, who were only seventy in number, to whom the divine and prophetical Spirit was vouchsafed. And again, it is the same number of heifers which are sacrificed at the solemn festival of the feast of tabernacles,† in a regular and proper division and order, for they are not all sacrificed together, but in seven days, the beginning being made with thirteen bulls; for thus, by every day subtracting one till they come to the number seven, the arranged number of seventy is properly completed.

And when they have come to the gates of virtue, the preliminary liberal sciences, and have seen the fountains, and the stems of the palm-trees growing by them, they are said to pitch their tents, not by the palm-trees, but by the waters. Why is this? Because those who carry off the prizes of perfect virtue are adorned with palm-leaves and with fillets; but those who are still exercising themselves in the preliminary branches of instruction, as people thirsting for learning, settle

* Exodus xv. 27. † Numbers xxix. 13.

themselves by the side of those sciences which are able to bedew and irrigate their souls.

XXXIV. Such then are the fountains of intermediate instruction. Let us now consider the fountain of folly, concerning which the lawgiver speaks thus, "Whosoever shall lie with a woman who is sitting apart has uncovered her fountain, and she has uncovered the issue of her blood; they shall both be destroyed."* He here calls the external sense a woman, representing the mind as her husband. When therefore the woman, having forsaken her legitimate husband, settles near those objects of the external sense which allures and destroys, and embraces them all in an amorous manner; then therefore, if the mind be turned to sleep when it is necessary that it should be awakened, it has uncovered the fountain of the external sense, that is itself, that is to say, it has rendered itself, without a covering and without a wall, and easy to be plotted against. But nevertheless the woman also has uncovered the fountain of her blood, for every external sense, when flowing towards the external object appreciable by it, is cheered and restrained by being under the dominion of the reason; and it is left in a solitary condition, being deprived of any proper governor. And as the most terrible misfortune for a city is to be without walls, so the most unfortunate state for a soul is to be without a guardian.

When, then, is it without a guardian? Is it not when the sight is without any covering, being poured forth upon the objects of sight; and when the hearing is without a covering, being occupied in drinking in all kinds of sounds; and when the sense of smell is uncovered, and the kindred powers are left to themselves, and so are most ready to suffer whatever the invading enemy may be disposed to inflict? And that speech is uncovered and uttered which speaks ten thousand things in an unseasonable manner, without any thing to restrain its impetuosity; therefore flowing on unrestrainedly, it overturns many noble purposes and plans of life which were previously sailing on erect as though in calm weather.

This is that great deluge in which "the cataracts of heaven were opened"†—by heaven I here mean of the mind—and the fountains of the bottomless pit were revealed; that is to say, of the outward sense; for in this way alone is the soul

* Leviticus xx. 18. † Genesis vii. 11.

overwhelmed, iniquities being broken up and poured over it from above, as from the heaven of the mind, and the passions irrigating it from below, as from the earth of the outward senses. For which reason Moses forbids a man to uncover the nakedness of his father or his mother,* well knowing how great an evil it is not to check and to conceal the offences of the mind and of the external sense, but to bring them forward and display them as though they were good actions.

XXXV. These are the fountains of errors. We must now examine that of prudence. To this one it is that perseverance, that is to say, Rebecca, descends;† and after she has filled up the whole vessel of her soul she goes up again, the lawgiver, most strictly in accordance with natural truth, calling her return an ascent; for whoever brings his mind to descend from over-arrogant haughtiness is raised to a great height of virtue. For Moses says, "And having gone down to the fountain, she filled her ewer, and went up again." This is that divine wisdom from which all the particular sciences are irrigated, and all the souls which love contemplation and are filled with a love of what is most excellent; and to this fountain the sacred scripture most appropriately assigns a name, calling it "judgment" and "holy." For says the historian, "Having turned back, they came to the fountain of judgment; this is the fountain of Caddes,"‡ and the interpretation of the name Caddes is holy. It all but cries out and shouts that the wisdom of God is holy, bringing with it nothing of the earth, and that it is the judgment of the universe by which all contrarieties are separated from one another.

XXXVI. We must now speak also concerning that highest and most excellent of fountains which the Father of the universe spake of by the mouths of the prophets; for he has said somewhere, "They have left me, the fountain of life, and they have digged for themselves cisterns already worn out, which will not be able to hold water;"§ therefore God is the most ancient of all fountains. And is not this very natural? For he it is who has irrigated the whole of this world: and I am amazed when I hear that this is the fountain of life, for God alone is the cause of animation and life, and most especially of rational animation and of that life which is in

* Leviticus xviii. 7.
† Genesis xxiv. 15.
‡ Genesis xiv. 7.
§ Jeremiah ii. 13.

union with prudence; for the matter is dead. But God is something more than life; he is, as he himself has said, the everlasting fountain of living.

But the wicked having fled away, and having passed their time without ever tasting the draught of immortality, have digged, insane persons that they are, for themselves, and not first for God, having preferred their own actions to the heavenly and celestial things, and the things which proceed from care to those which are spontaneous and ready. Then they dig, not as the wise men Abraham and Isaac did, making wells, but cisterns, which have no good nutritious stream belonging to and proceeding from themselves, but requiring an influx from without, which must proceed from instruction. While the teachers are always pouring into the ears of their disciples all kinds of doctrines and speculations of science altogether, admonishing them to retain them in their minds, and to preserve them when faithfully committed to memory.

But now they are but worn-out cisterns, that is to say, all the channels of the ill-educated soul are broken and leaky, not being able to hold and to preserve the influx of those streams which are able to profit.

XXXVII. We have now then said as much as the time will permit us to say on the subject of the fountains, and it is with great accuracy and propriety that the sacred scriptures represent Hagar as found at the fountain, and not as drawing water from it: for the soul has not as yet made such an advance as to be fit to use the unmixed draught of wisdom; but it is not forbidden from making its abode in its neighbourhood. And all the road which is made by instruction is easy to travel, and most safe, and most solid, and strong, on which account the scripture tells us that she was found in the road leading to Shur; and the name Shur being interpreted means a wall or a direction. Therefore its convicter, speaking to the soul, says, "Whence comest thou, and whither goest thou?" And it says, not because it doubts, and not so much by way of asking a question, as in a downcast and reproachful spirit, for an angel cannot be ignorant of anything that concerns us, and a proof of this is, that he is well acquainted even with the things which are in the womb, and which are invisible to the creature, inasmuch as he says, "Behold thou art with child, and thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name

Ishmael;" for to know that that which is conceived is a male child does not belong to human power, any more than it does to foretell the description of life which the child who is not yet born will adopt, namely, that it will be rude life, and not that of a citizen or of a polished man.

The expression, "Whence comest thou?" is said by way of reproving the soul, which is fleeing from the better and dominant opinion, of which she is the handmaiden, not in name more than in fact, and by remaining in subjection to which she would gain great glory. And the expression, "And whither goest thou?" means, you are running after uncertain things, having discarded and thrown away confessed good. It is well, therefore, to praise her for rejoicing at this admonition. And she shows a proof of her delighting in it, by not bringing any accusation against her mistress, and by attributing the cause of her running away to her own self, and by her making no reply to the second question, "Whither goest thou?" for it is a matter of uncertainty; and it is both safe and necessary to restrain one's self from speaking of what is uncertain.

XXXVIII. Therefore the convicter of the soul approving of her in respect of her obedience says, Return unto thy mistress; for the government of the teacher is profitable to the disciple, and servitude in subjection to wisdom is advantageous to her who is imperfect; and when thou returnest, "be thou humbled under her hands:"—a very beautiful humiliation, comprehending the destruction of irrational pride. For thus, after a gentle travail, thou wilt bring forth a male child, by name Ishmael, corrected by divine admonitions; for Ishmael, being interpreted, means "the hearing of God;" and hearing is considered as entitled to only the second prize after seeing; but seeing is the inheritance of the legitimate and first-born son, Israel; for the name Israel, being interpreted, means "seeing God."

For it is possible for a man to hear false statements as though they were true, because hearing is a deceitful thing; but seeing is a sense which cannot be deceived, by which a man perceives existing things as they really are. But the angel describes the characteristics of the disposition which is born of Hagar, by saying that he will be a rude man; as if *he had said that* he would be a man wise about rude matters.

and not as yet thought worthy of that which is the truly divine and political portion of life: and this is virtue, by means of which it is the nature of the moral character to be humanised. And by his saying, "His hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him," he means to describe the design and plan of life of a sophist, who professes an over-curious scepticism, and who rejoices in disputatious arguments.

Such a man shoots at all the followers of learning, and in his own person opposes all men, both publicly and privately, and is shot at by all who very naturally repel him as if they were acting in defence of their own offspring, that is to say, of the doctrines which their soul has brought forth.

He also adds a third characteristic of him, saying, "He shall dwell before the face of all his brethren." In these words all but expressly declaring that he will wage an everlasting battle and war against them, face to face, for ever. Therefore the soul, which is pregnant with sophistical reasoning, says to the convicter who is addressing her, "Thou art God, who hast beheld me:" an expression equivalent to, Thou art the creator of my plans and of my offspring. And may we not look upon this as a very natural reply on her part? For of these souls which are free, and, as it were truly citizens, the Creator is free, and a deliverer; but of slavish minds, slaves are the creators.

And the angels are the servants of God, and are considered actual gods by those who are in toil and slavery; on this account, says Moses, she called the well, "The well where I saw in front of me." But O, thou soul! advancing in wisdom and plunging deep into the knowledge of the elementary parts of encyclical instruction, thou wast not able to see the cause of thy knowledge in instruction as in a mirror. But the most appropriate place for such a well is in the midst, between Caddes and Barad; and the name Barad, being interpreted, means "in common," and Caddes means "holy;" for the person who is in a state of imprisonment is on the confines between what is holy and what is profane, fleeing from what is wicked, and being not yet able to live in the company of what is perfectly good.

A TREATISE

ON THE QUESTION

WHY CERTAIN NAMES IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES ARE CHANGED.

I. "ABRAHAM was ninety and nine years old; and the Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said unto him, I am thy God."* The number of nine, when added to the number ninety, is very near to a hundred; in which number the self-taught race shone forth, namely Isaac, the most excellent joy of all enjoyments; for he was born when his father was a hundred years old. Moreover the first fruits of the tribe of Levi are given up to the priests;† for they having taken tithes, offer up other tenths from them as from their own fruits, which thus comprise the number of a hundred; for the number ten is the symbol of improvement, and the number a hundred is the symbol of perfection; and he that is in the middle is always striving to reach the extremity, exerting the inborn goodness of his nature, by which he says, that the Lord of the universe has appeared to him.

But do not thou think that this appearance presented itself to the eyes of the body, for they see no things but such as are perceptible to the outward senses; but those objects of the outward senses are compound ones, full of destruction; but the Deity is not a compound object, and is indestructible: but the eye which receives the impression of the divine appearance is the eye of the soul; for besides this, those things which it is only the eyes of the body that see, are only seen by them because they take light as a coadjutor, and light is different, both from the object seen and from the things which see it.

But all these things which the soul sees of itself, and through its own power, it sees without the co-operation of any thing or any one else; for the things which the soul does thus comprehend are a light to themselves, and in the same way also we learn the sciences; for the mind, applying its never-closing and never-slumbering eye to their doctrines and speculations, sees them by no spurious light, but by that genuine

* Genesis xvii. 1. † Numbers xviii. 26.

light which shines forth from itself. When therefore you hear that God has been seen by man, you must consider that this is said without any reference to that light which is perceptible by the external senses, for it is natural that that which is appreciable only by the intellect should be presented to the intellect alone; and the fountain of the purest light is God; so that when God appears to the soul he pours forth his beams without any shade, and beaming with the most radiant brilliancy.

II. Do not, however, think that the living God, he who is truly living, is ever seen so as to be comprehended by any human being; for we have no power in ourselves to see any thing, by which we may be able to conceive any adequate notion of him; we have no external sense suited to that purpose (for he is not an object which can be discerned by the outward sense), nor any strength adequate to it: therefore, Moses, the spectator of the invisible nature, the man who really saw God (for the sacred scriptures say that he entered "into the darkness,"* by which expression they mean figuratively to intimate the invisible essence), having investigated every part of every thing, sought to see clearly the much-desired and only God; but when he found nothing, not even any appearance at all resembling what he had hoped to behold; he, then, giving up all idea of receiving instruction on that point from any other source, flies to the very being himself whom he was seeking, and entreats him, saying, "Show me thyself that I may see thee so as to know thee."†

But, nevertheless, he fails to obtain the end which he had proposed to himself, and which he had accounted the most all-sufficient gift for the most excellent race of creation, mankind, namely a knowledge of those bodies and things which are below the living God. For it is said unto him, "Thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be beheld by thee."‡ As if it were meant to answer him: Those bodies and things which are beneath the living God may come within thy comprehension, even though every thing would not be at once comprehended by thee, since that one being is not by his nature capable of being beheld by man. And what wonder is there if the living God is beyond the reach of the comprehension of man, when even the mind that is in each of us is

* Exodus xx. 21. † Exodus xxxiii. 13. ‡ Exodus xxxiii. 23.

unintelligible and unknown to us? Who has ever beheld the essence of the soul? the obscure nature of which has given rise to an infinite number of contests among the sophists who have brought forward opposite opinions, some of which are inconsistent with any kind of nature.

It was, therefore, quite consistent with reason that no proper name could with propriety be assigned to him who is in truth the living God. Do you not see that to the prophet who is really desirous of making an honest inquiry after the truth, and who asks what answer he is to give to those who question him as to the name of him who has sent him, he says, "I am that I am,"* which is equivalent to saying, "It is my nature to be, not to be described by name:" but in order that the human race may not be wholly destitute of any appellation which they may give to the most excellent of beings, I allow you to use the word Lord as a name; the Lord God of three natures—of instruction, and of holiness, and of the practice of virtue; of which Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob are recorded as the symbols. For this, says he, is the everlasting name, as if it had been investigated and discerned in time as it exists in reference to us, and not in that time which was before all time; and it is also a memorial not placed beyond recollection or intelligence, and again it is addressed to persons who have been born, not to uncreated natures.

For these men have need of the complete use of the divine name who come to a created or mortal generation, in order that, if they cannot attain to the best thing, they may at least arrive at the best possible name, and arrange themselves in accordance with that; and the sacred oracle which is delivered as from the mouth of the Ruler of the universe, speaks of the proper name of God never having been revealed to any one, when God is represented as saying, "For I have not shown them my name;"† for by a slight change in the figure of speech here used, the meaning of what is said would be something of this kind: "My proper name I have not revealed to them," but only that which is commonly used, though with some misapplication, because of the reasons above-mentioned.

And, indeed, the living God is so completely indescribable, that even those powers which minister unto him do not

* Exodus iii. 14. † Exodus vi. 3.

announce his proper name to us. At all events, after the wrestling match in which the practiser of virtue wrestled for the sake of the acquisition of virtue, he says to the invisible Master, "Tell me thy name;"* but he said, "Why askest thou me my name?" And he does not tell him his peculiar and proper name, for says he, it is sufficient for thee to be taught my ordinary explanations. But as for names which are the symbols of created things, do not seek to find them among immortal natures.

III. Therefore do not doubt either whether that which is more ancient than any existing thing is indescribable, when his very word is not to be mentioned by us according to its proper name. So that we must understand that the expression, "The Lord was seen by Abraham,"† means not as if the Cause of all things had shone forth and become visible, (for what human mind is able to contain the greatness of his appearance?) but as if some one of the powers which surround him, that is to say, his kingly power, had presented itself to the sight, for the appellation Lord belongs to authority and sovereignty.

But when our mind was occupied with the wisdom of the Chaldæans, studying the sublime things which exist in the world, it made as it were the circuit of all the efficient powers as causes of what existed; but when it emigrated from the Chaldæan doctrines, it then knew that it was moving under the guidance and direction of a governor, of whose authority it perceived the appearance. On which account it is said, "The Lord," not the living God, "was seen;" as if it had been meant to say, the king appeared, he who was from the beginning, but who was not as yet recognized by the soul, which, indeed, was late in learning, but which did not continue for ever in ignorance, but received a notion of there being an authority and governing power among existing things.

And when the ruler has appeared, then he in a still greater degree benefits his disciple and beholder, saying, "I am thy God;"‡ for I should say to him, "What is there of all the things which form a part of creation of which thou art not the God?" But his word, which is his interpreter, will teach me that he is not at present speaking of the world, of which he is by all means the creator and the God, but about the souls of

* Genesis xxxii. 29. † Genesis xvii. 1. ‡ Genesis xvii. 1.

men, which he has thought worthy of a different kind of care; for he thinks fit to be called the Lord and Master of bad men, but the God of those who are in a state of advancement and improvement; and of those which are the most excellent and the most perfect, both Lord and God at once. On which account, having made Pharaoh the very extreme instance of impiety, he has never once called himself his Lord or his God; but he calls the wise Moses so, for he says to him, "Behold I give thee as a god to Pharaoh."* But he has in many passages of the sacred oracles delivered by him, called himself Lord. For instance, we read such a passage as this: "Thus says the Lord;"† and at the very beginning we read, "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I am the Lord, say unto Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, all the things which I say unto thee."‡ And Moses, in another place, says, "Behold, when I go forth out of the city I will spread out my hands unto the Lord, and the sounds shall cease, and the hail, and there shall be no more rain, that thou mayest know that the earth is the Lord's;" that is to say, every thing that is made of body or of earth, "and that thou," that is the mind which bears in itself the images of things, "and thy servants," that is the particular reasonings which act as body-guards to the mind, "for I know that ye do not yet fear the Lord;"§ by which he means not the Lord who is spoken of commonly and in different senses, but him who is truly the Master of all things.

For there is in truth no created Lord, not even if a king shall have extended his authority and spread it from one end of the world even to the other end, but only the uncreated God, the real governor, whose authority he who reverences and fears receives a most beneficial reward, namely, the admonitions of God, but utterly miserable destruction awaits the man who despises him; therefore he is held forth as the Lord of the foolish, striking them with a terror which is appropriate to him as ruler. But he is the God of those who are improved; as we read now, "I am thy God, I am thy God, be thou increased and multiplied."‖ And in the case of those who are perfect, he is both together, both Lord and God; as we read in the ten commandments, "I am the Lord thy

* Genesis vii. 1.
† Exodus vii. 17.
‡ Exodus vi. 29.
§ Exodus ix. 29.
‖ *Genesis* xvii. 1, also xxxv. 2.

God."* And in another passage it is written, "The Lord God of our fathers."†

For he thinks it right for the wicked man to be governed by a master as by a lord; that, being in a state of alarm and groaning, he may have the fear of a master suspended over him; but him who is advancing in improvement he thinks deserving to receive benefits as from God in order that by means of these benefits he may arrive at perfection; and him who is complete and perfect he thinks should be both governed as by the Lord, and benefited as by God; for the last man remains for ever unchangeable, and he is, by all means and in all respects, the man of God: and this is especially shown to be the fact in the case of Moses; for, says the scripture, "This is the blessing which Moses, the man of God, blessed."‡ O the man thus thought worthy of this all-beautiful and sacred recompense, to give himself as a requital for the divine Providence! But do not thou think that he is in the same sense a man and the man of God; for he is said to be a man as being a possession of God, but the man of God as boasting in and being benefited by him. And if thou wishest to have God as the inheritance of thy mind, then do thou in the first place labour to become yourself an inheritance worthy of him, and thou wilt be such if thou avoidest all laws made by hands and voluntary.

IV. But it is not right to be ignorant of this thing either, that the statement, "I am thy God,"§ is made by a certain figurative misuse of language rather than with strict propriety; for the living God, inasmuch as he is living, does not consist in relation to anything; for he himself is full of himself, and he is sufficient for himself, and he existed before the creation of the world, and equally after the creation of the universe; for he is immovable and unchangeable, having no need of any other thing or being whatever, so that all things belong to him, but, properly speaking, he does not belong to anything. And of the powers which he has extended towards creation for the advantage of the world which is thus put together, some are spoken of, as it were, in relation to these things; as for instance his kingly and his beneficent power; for he is the king of something, and the benefactor of something there

* Exodus xx. 2.
† Deuteronomy iv. 1.
‡ Deuteronomy xxxiii. 1.
§ Genesis xvii. 1.

being inevitably something which is ruled over and which receives the benefits.

Akin to these powers is the creative power which is called God: for by means of this power the Father, who begot and created all things, did also disperse and arrange them; so that the expression, "I am thy God," is equivalent to, "I am thy maker and creator;" and it is the greatest of all possible gifts to have him for one's maker, who has also been the maker of the whole world. The soul, indeed, of the wicked man he did not make, for wickedness is hateful to God; and the soul, which is between good and bad, he made not by himself alone, according to the most sacred historian Moses, since that, like wax, was about to receive the different impressions of good and evil. On which account it is said in the scriptures, "Let us make man in our own image," that if it receives a bad impression it may appear to be the work of others, but if it receives a good impression it may then appear to be the work of him who is the Creator only of what is beautiful and good.

By all means, therefore, that must be a good man to whom he says, "I am thy God," as he has had him alone for his creator without the co-operation of any other being. Moreover he brings up with this that doctrine which is established in many other passages, showing that God is the creator only of those men who are virtuous and wise; and the whole of this company has voluntarily deprived itself of the abundant possession of external things, and has neglected those things which are dear to the flesh. For the athletes of vigorous health and high spirit have erected their servile bodies as a sort of fortification against the soul, but those men who have been devoted to the pursuit of instruction, and who are pale, and weak, and emaciated, having overloaded the vigour of the body with the powers of the soul, and, if one must tell the plain truth, being entirely dissolved into one species of soul, have through the energy of their minds become quite disentangled from the body.

Therefore that which is earthly is very naturally destroyed and overwhelmed when the entire mind resolves in every particular to make itself acceptable to God. But the race of these persons is rare and scarcely to be found, and one may almost say is unable to exist; and the following oracle, which is given with respect to Enoch, proves this: "Enoch pleased

God, and he was not found;"* for by what kind of contemplation could a man attain to this good thing? What seas must he cross over? What islands, or what continents, must he visit? Must he dwell among the Greeks or among the barbarians? Are there not even to the present day some of those persons who have attained to perfection in philosophy, who say that there is no such thing as wisdom in the world, since there is also no such thing as a wise man? for that from the very beginning of the creation of mankind up to the present moment, there has never been any one who could be considered entirely blameless, for that it is impossible for a man who is bound up in a mortal body to be entirely and altogether happy.

Now whether these things are said correctly we will consider at the proper time: but at present let us stick to the subject before us, and follow the scripture, and say that there is such a thing as wisdom existing, and that he who loves wisdom is wise. But though the wise man has thus an actual existence he has escaped the notice of us who are wicked: for what is good will not unite with what is bad. On this account it is that "the disposition which pleased God was not found:" as if in truth it had a real existence, but was concealed and had fled away to avoid any meeting in the same place with us, since it is said to have been translated; the meaning of which expression is that it emigrated and departed from its sojourn in this mortal life, to an abode in immortal life.

V. These men then, being mad with this divinely inspired madness, were made more ferocious; but there are others who are companions of a more manageable and humanised wisdom. By those men piety is practised to a most eminent degree, and the observance due to man is not neglected. And the sacred oracles are witnesses of this in which Abraham is addressed (the words being put in the mouth of God), "Thou shalt be pleasing in my sight,"† that is to say, thou shalt be pleasing, not only to me but also to my works, in my eyes as judge, and overseer, and superintendant; for if you honour your parents, or show mercy to the poor, or do good to your friends, or fight in defence of your country, or pay proper attention to the common principles of justice towards all men, you most

* Genesis v. 24. † Genesis xvii. 3.

certainly are pleasing to those with whom you associate, and you are also acceptable in the sight of God: for he sees all things with an eye which never slumbers, and he unites to himself with especial favour all that is good, and that he accepts and embraces.

Therefore the practiser of virtue, even while praying, proves the very same thing, saying, "The God to whom my fathers were acceptable,"* and he adds also the words "before him," for the sake of giving you to know the difference, the real practical difference between the expression, "to please God," by itself, and the same words with the addition of the sentence, "before him." For the one expression gives both meanings, and the other only one. Thus also Moses, in his exhortatory admonitions, recommends his disciples such and such things, saying, "Thou shalt do what is pleasing before the Lord thy God,"† as if he were to say, Do such things as shall be worthy to appear before God, and what he when he sees them will accept. And these things are wont to appear equally pure both externally and internally.‡ And proceeding onwards from thence he wove the tent of the tabernacle with two boundaries of space, placing a veil between the two, in order to separate what is within from what is without. And also he gilded the sacred ark, the place wherein the laws were kept, both within and without; and he gave the great high priest two robes, the inner one made of linen, and the outer one beautifully embroidered, with one robe reaching to the feet.

For these and such things as these are symbols of the soul which in its inner parts shows itself pure towards God, and in its exterior parts shows itself without reproach in reference to the world which is perceptible to the outward senses and to this life: with great felicity therefore was this said to the victorious wrestler, when he was about to have his brows crowned with the garlands of victory: and the declaration made with respect to him was of the following tenor, "You have been mightily powerful both with God and with men;"§ for to have a good

* Genesis xlviii. 15.

† Deuteronomy xii. 28.

‡ This passage is given up by Mangey as corrupt. The text has *ταῦτα δὲ καὶ εἰς τοὺς ὁμοίους εἴωθε χωρεῖν*, which is quite unintelligible. Mangey corrects it, *ταῦτα δὲ τοῖς εἴσω καὶ ἔξω ὁμοίως εἴωθε καθαρεύειν* of which he gives a Latin translation which I have followed.

§ *Genesis xxxii. 28.*

reputation with both classes, namely, with the uncreated God and with the creature, is the task of no small mind, but, if one must say the truth, it is one fit for that which is in the confines between the world and God.

In short, it is necessary that the good man should be an attendant of God, for the creature is an object of care to the Ruler and Father of the universe; for who is there who does not know, that even before the creation of the world God was himself sufficient to himself, and that he remained as much a friend as before after the creation of the world, without having undergone any change? Why then did he make what did not exist before? Because he was good and bounteous. Shall we not then, we who are slaves, follow our master, admiring, in an exceeding degree, the great first Cause of all things, and not altogether despising our own nature?

VI. But after he has said, "Be thou pleasing to me before me," he adds further, "and be thou blameless," using here a natural consequence and connection of the previous sentence. Do thou therefore all the more apply thyself to what is good that thou mayest be pleasing; and if thou canst not be pleasing, at all events abstain from open sins, that thou mayest not incur reproach. For he who does right is praiseworthy, and he who avoids doing wrong is not to be blamed. And the most important prize is assigned to those who do right, namely, the prize of feeling that they are acceptable to God: but the second prize belongs to those who do no sin, that, namely, of avoiding blame; and, perhaps, in the case of the mortal race of mankind, the doing no sin is set down as equivalent to doing right; for who, as Job says, is "pure from pollution, even if his life be but one single day long?"*

In fact, the things which pollute the soul are infinite in number, and it is impossible completely to wash them away and to efface their stains; for there are, of necessity, left disasters which are akin to every mortal man, which it is natural indeed to weaken, but impossible wholly to eradicate. Does any one therefore seek a just, or prudent, or temperate, or, in short, any perfectly good man, in this confused life? Be content if you find one who is not wholly unjust, or foolish, or intemperate, or cowardly, or who is not utterly worthless; for the avoidance of evil is a thing with which to be content, but

* Job xiv. 4.

the complete acquisition of the virtues is unattainable to any man, such as is endowed with our nature.

It was therefore with great reason that it was said, "and be thou blameless," the speaker thinking that it is a great addition towards a happy life to live without sin and without reproach; but the man who has deliberately chosen this way of life, promises to leave his inheritance in accordance with the covenant, such as is becoming to God to give, and to a wise man to accept, for he says, "I will place my covenant between me and between thee;"* and covenants and testaments are written for the advantage of those who are worthy of the gift, so that a testament is a symbol of grace, which God has placed between himself who proffers it and man who receives it; and this is the very extravagance of beneficence, that there is nothing between God and the soul except his own virgin grace. And I have written two commentaries on the whole discussion concerning testaments, and for that reason I now deliberately pass over that subject, for the sake of not appearing to repeat what I have said before; and also at the same time, because I do not wish here to interrupt the connected course of this discussion.

VII. And immediately afterwards it is said, "And Abraham fell on his face:" was he not about, in accordance with the divine promises, to recognize himself and the nothingness of the race of mankind, and so to fall down before him who stood firm, by way of displaying the conception which he entertained of himself and of God? Forsooth that God, standing always in the same place, moves the whole composition of the world, not by means of his legs, for he has not the form of a man, but by showing his unalterable and immovable essence. But man, being never settled firmly in the same place, admits of different changes at different times, and being tripped up, miserable man that he is (for, in fact, his whole life is one continued stumble), he meets with a terrible fall; but he who does this against his will is ignorant, and he who does it voluntarily is docile; on which account he is said to fall on his face, that is to say, in his outward senses, in his speech, in his mind, all but crying out loudly and shouting that the outward sense has fallen, inasmuch as it was unable, by itself, to feel as it should, if it had not been aroused by the provi-

* Genesis xvii. 2.

dence of the Saviour, to take hold of the bodies which lay in its way. And speech too has fallen, being unable to give a proper explanation of anything in existence, unless he who originally made and adapted the organ of the voice, having opened its mouth and enabled its tongue to articulate, should strike it so as to produce harmonious sounds. Moreover, the king of all the mind has fallen, being deprived of its comprehension, unless the Creator of all living things were again to raise it up and re-establish it, and furnishing it with the most acutely seeing eyes, to lead it to a sight of incorporeal things.

VIII. Therefore admiring this same disposition when thus taking to flight, and submitting to a voluntary fall by reason of the confession which it had made respecting the living God, namely, that he stands in truth and is one only, while all other things beneath him are subject to all kinds of motions and alterations, he speaks to it, and allows it to enter into conversation with him, saying, "And I, behold my covenant is with thee."* And this expression conceals beneath its figurative words such a meaning as this: There are very many kinds of covenants, which distribute graces and gifts to those who are worthy to receive them; but the highest kind of covenant of all is I myself: for God, having displayed himself as far as it was possible for that being to be displayed who cannot be shown by the words which he has used, adds further, "And I too, behold my covenant;" the beginning and fountain of all graces is I myself.

For on some persons God is in the habit of bestowing his graces by the intervention of others; as, for instance, through the medium of earth, water, air, the sun, the moon, heaven, and other incorporeal powers. But he bestows them on others through himself alone, exhibiting himself as the inheritance of those who receive him, whom from that he thinks worthy of another appellation: for it is said in the scripture, "Thy name shall not be called Abram, but Abraham shall thy name be." Some, then, of those persons who are foud of disputes, and who are always eager to affix a stain upon what is irreproachable, on things as well as bodies, and who wage an implacable war against sacred things, while they calumniate everything which does not appear to preserve strict decorum in speech, being the symbols of nature which is always fond of

* Genesis xvii. 4.

being concealed, perverting it all so as to give it a worse appearance after a very accurate investigation, do especially find fault with the changes of names.

And it is only lately that I heard an ungodly and impious man mocking and ridiculing these things, who ventured to say, "Surely they are great and exceeding gifts which Moses says that the Ruler of the universe offers, who, by the addition of one element, the one letter alpha, a superfluous element;* and then again adding another element, the letter rho, appears to have bestowed upon men a most marvellous and great benefit; for he has called the wife of Abram Sarrah instead of Sarah, doubling the Rho," and connecting a number of similar arguments without drawing breath, and joking and mocking, he went through many instances. But at no distant period he suffered a suitable punishment for his insane wickedness; for on a very slight and ordinary provocation he hanged himself, in order that so polluted and impure a person might not die by a pure and unpolluted death.

IX. But we may justly, in order to prevent any one else from falling into the same error, eradicate the erroneous notions which have been formed on the subject, arguing the matter on the principle of natural philosophy, and proving that these things which are here said are worthy of all attention. God does not bestow on men mutes and vowels, or, in short, nouns and verbs; since when he created plants and animals, he summoned them before man as their governor, that he might give each of them their appropriate names by a reference to the knowledge which he had of all things; for, says the scripture, "Whatever Adam called any thing, that was the name thereof." †

Therefore since God did not think fit to take upon himself even the active imposition of the names, but entrusted the task to a wise man, the author of the whole race of mankind, is it reasonable to suppose that he himself gave and arranged the different parts, and syllables, and letters of nouns, disposing not only the vowels, but even the mutes, and that he did this too to make a show of liberality and exceeding beneficence? It is impossible to say so. But such things as these are the

* The text here is very corrupt. Mangey adopts the emendations of Markland, and I have followed his translation.

† *Genesis ii. 19.*

characteristic marks of different powers; small marks of great powers, marks perceptible by the outward senses of powers appreciable only by the intellect, manifest marks of powers which are indistinct; and the powers themselves are discerned in most excellent doctrines, in true and pure conceptions, in the improvement of souls.

And it is easy to see a proof of this if we make a beginning with the man who is here spoken of as having his name changed; for the name Abram, being interpreted, means "sublime father," but Abraham means the "elect father of sound;" and how these names differ from one another we shall know more clearly if we first of all read what is exhibited under each of them. Now using allegorical language, we call that man sublime who raises himself from the earth to a height, and who devotes himself to the inspection of high things; and we also call him a haunter of high regions, and a meteorologist, inquiring what is the magnitude of the sun, what are his motions, how he influences the seasons of the year, advancing as he does and retreating back again, with revolutions of equal speed, and investigating as he does the subjects of the radiance of the moon, of its shape, of its waning, of its increase, and of the motion of the other stars, whether fixed or wandering; for the inquiry into these matters belongs not to an ill-conditioned or barren soul, but to one which is eminently endowed by nature, and which is able to produce an entire and perfect offspring; on which account the scripture calls the meteorologist "father," inasmuch as he is not unproductive of wisdom.

X. Now the symbols represented by the name of Abram are thus accurately defined; those conveyed under the name of Abraham are such as we shall proceed to demonstrate. The meanings now are three, "the father," and "elect," and "of sound." Now by the word "sound" here, we mean uttered speech; for the sounding organ of the living animal is the organ of speech. Of this faculty we say that the father is the mind, for it is from the mind, as from a fountain, that the stream of speech proceeds. The word "elect" belongs to the mind of the wise man, for whatever is most excellent is found in him; therefore the man devoted to learning and occupied in the contemplation of sublime subjects, was sketched out according to the former characteristic marks, but the philosopher, or I should rather say the wise man, was exhibited in

accordance with those of which we have just given an outline.

Think not, then, any longer that the Deity bestows a change of names, but consider that what he gives is a correction of the moral character by means of symbols; for having invited the man who formerly busied himself about the subject of the nature of heaven, and whom some call a mathematician, to a participation in virtue, he made him wise and called him so. For having given an appropriate name to his transformed disposition, he named him, as the Hebrews would call it, "Abraham," but in the language of the Greeks, "the elect father of sound;" for says he, On what account dost thou investigate the motions and periods of the stars? and why hast thou bounded up so high from the earth to the heavens? Is it merely that you may indulge your curiosity with respect to those matters? And what advantage could accrue to you from all this curiosity? What destruction of pleasure would it cause? What defeat of appetite? What dissolution of pain or fear? What eradication of the passions which disturb and agitate the soul? For as there is no advantage in trees unless they are productive of fruit, so in the same way there is no use in the study of natural philosophy unless it is likely to confer upon a man the acquisition of virtue, for that is its proper fruit.

On which account some of the ancients have compared the discussion and consideration of philosophy to a field, and have likened the physical portion of it to the plants, the logical part to the hedges and fences, the moral part to the fruit, thinking that the walls which are built around for the sake of protecting the fruit have been erected by the possessors of the land, and that the plants have been created for the sake of the production of fruit; thus, therefore, they said that in philosophy it is requisite for the consideration of the physical and the logical part of philosophy to be referred to the moral part, by which the moral character is improved, which has a desire at the same time for both the acquisition and the use of virtue. This is the lesson which we have been taught concerning the man who in word indeed had his name changed, but who in reality changed his nature from the consideration of natural to that of moral philosophy, and who abandoned the contemplation of the world itself for the knowledge of the Being who

created the world; by which knowledge he acquired piety, the most excellent of all possessions.

XI. We will now speak of his wife, Sarah, for she too had her name changed to Sarrah by the addition of the one element, the letter rho. These, then, are the names, and we must now explain what they mean. Sarah, being interpreted, signifies "my authority," but Sarrah signifies "princess;" the former name, therefore, is a symbol of specific virtue, but the latter of generic virtue. But in proportion as genus is superior to species in regard of quantity, in the same proportion does the latter name excel the former; for species is something small and perishable, but genus is numerous and immortal, and the intention of God is to bestow great and immortal things instead of such as are small and perishable, and this is a task suited to his dignity.

Now the prudence which exists in the virtuous man is the authority of himself alone, and he who has it would not err if he were to say, my authority is the prudence which is in me; but that which has stretched out this authority is generic prudence, not any longer the authority of this or that person, but absolute intrinsic authority; therefore that which exists only in species will perish at the same time with its possessor, but that which, like a seal, has stamped it with an impression, is free from all mortality, and will remain for ever and ever imperishable. Thus also those arts which exist only in species perish along with those who have acquired them, such as geometricians, grammarians, and musicians, but the generic arts remain exempt from destruction. And, again, he gives an additional sketch of his meaning when he teaches by the same name that every virtue is a princess, and a queen, and a ruler of all the affairs of life.

XII. But it has also happened that Jacob had his name changed to Israel; and this, too, was a felicitous alteration. Why so? Because the name Jacob means "a supplanter," but the name Israel signifies "the man who sees God." Now it is the employment of a supplanter, who practises virtue, to move, and disturb, and upset the foundations of passion on which it is established, and whatever there is of any strength which is founded on them. But these things are not brought about without a struggle or without severe labour; but only when any one, having gone through all the labours of prudence,

then proceeds to practise himself in the exercises of the soul and to wrestle against the reasonings which are hostile to it, and which seek to torment it; but it is the part of him who sees God not to depart from the sacred contest without the crown of victory, but rather to carry off the prize of triumph. And what more flourishing and more suitable crown could be woven for the victorious soul than one by which it will be able acutely and clearly to behold the living God? At least a beautiful prize is thus proposed for the soul which delights in the practice of virtue, namely, the being endowed with sight adequate to the clear comprehension of the only thing which is really worth beholding.

XIII. And it is worth while here to raise the question why Abraham, from the time that his name was changed, is always thought worthy of this same appellation, and is no longer called by his former name; but Jacob, who is also called Israel, is nevertheless called Jacob too, as he was before the change of his name; and, indeed, is called Jacob oftener than Israel.

We must say, then, that these facts are characters by which it is seen that the virtue which is taught differs from that which is acquired by practice; for the man who is improved by instruction, having received a happy and virtuous nature, uses that virtue alone which, by means of memory co-operating with it, implants in him an absence of forgetfulness, so that he comprehends and takes firm hold of all the things which he has once learnt; but he who practises virtue, since he is continually exercising himself, stops to take breath, and relaxes his efforts for a while, collecting himself and recovering the vigour which was a little impaired by his exertions, just as those men do who have oiled their bodies for the contests in the arena For these men, also, labouring at their training exercises, in order to prevent their powers being utterly broken down, anoint themselves with oil on account of the violent and continued nature of their exercise

Then the man who is improved by instruction, having an immortal monitor, receives from him a harmonious and imperishable advantage, without suffering any change; but the practiser of virtue is impelled to action by his own inclination alone, and he exercises himself in it, and labours at it in order *to change that passion*, which is akin to a created being; and

even if he attains to perfection, he still, being fatigued, returns to his ancient kind of labour; for he is more inclined to endure toil, but the other is more fortunate, for he has another person as a teacher. But this man, by his own unassisted efforts, investigates, and inquires, and pushes his examination, investigating the mysteries of nature with great earnestness, and exerting continual and incessant labour.

For this reason God, who never changes, altered the name of Abraham, since he was about to remain in a similar condition, in order that that which was to be firmly established might be confirmed by him who was standing firmly, and who was remaining in the same state in the same manner. But it was an angel who altered the name of Jacob, being the Word, the minister of God; in order that it might be confessed and ascertained, that there is none of the things whose existence is subsequent to that of the living God, which is the cause of unchangeable and unvarying firmness . . . . . but of that harmony which, as in a musical instrument, contains the intensity and relaxation of sounds so as to produce an artistical combination of melody.

XIV. But, there being three leaders and authors of this race, the two at each extremity of it had their names changed, namely Abraham and Jacob: but the one in the middle, Isaac, always retained the same appellation. Why was this? Because both that virtue which is derived from teaching and that which is attained to by practice, admit of improvement and advancement: for the man who receives instruction desires a knowledge of those matters of which he is ignorant and he who applies himself to practice desires the crowns of victory, and the prizes which are proposed to his industrious and contemplation-loving soul. But the race which is self-taught and which derives all its learning from its own diligence, inasmuch as it exists rather by nature than by study, was at the very beginning introduced as equal, and perfect, and even, there being no number whatever deficient of those which tend to completeness.

Nor indeed does Joseph have any such need, he who is the president of the necessities of the body; for he also changes his name, being called Psonthomphanech by the king of the country. And what the meaning of these names is we must explain; the name Joseph, being interpreted, signifies "an

addition" For things which are put by the side are an addition to those which exist by nature; for instance, gold, silver, possessions, revenues, the ministrations of servants, abundant treasure of heirlooms, and furniture, and other superfluities, and the infinite multitude of the different efficients of pleasure which some persons possess; the provider and superintendant of which was called Joseph, or addition, by a very felicitous nomenclature: since he had undertaken the superintendence of the things which were to be brought in from without, and added to the natural things previously existing in the course of nature. And the sacred scriptures testify that this is the case, showing that he was the purveyor of the food of all the corporeal region, Egypt, having stored it up in his treasure-houses.

XV. Such a person as this, then, Joseph is recognized as being by his distinctive marks and name. Let us now see what sort of person is indicated by the name Psonthomphanech. Now this name being interpreted means, "a mouth judging in an answer;" for every foolish person thinks that the man who is very rich and overflowing with external possessions, must at once be wise and sensible, competent to give an answer to any question which any one puts to him, and competent also of his own head to deliver advantageous and sagacious opinions. And, in short, by such men prudence is supposed to be identical with good fortune, while one ought, on the contrary, to consider good fortune as consisting in being prudent; for it is fitting that what is unstable should be under the direction of that which stands firmly.

And indeed his father gave to his own uterine brother the name of Benjamin:* but his mother called him the son of her sorrow, speaking most completely in accordance with nature. For the name Benjamin being interpreted means, "the son of days:" and the day is illuminated by that light of the sun which is perceptible by the outward senses: and to this we liken vain glory. For that has a certain brilliancy appreciable by the outward senses in the praises which it receives from the multitude and from the common herd of men, in formally enrolled decrees, in the erection of statues and images, in purple robes and golden crowns, in chariots and teams of four horses, and processions of the multitude. He therefore who

* Genesis xxxv. 18.

is an admirer and desirer of such things is very appropriately called a son of days: that is to say, of that light which is perceptible by the outward senses and of the brilliancy which attends vain glory. This felicitous and appropriate name the elder word and real father imposes on him; but the soul which has suffered gives him a name suited to what she has suffered. For she calls him the son of her sorrow. Why so? Because those men who are borne about by vain glory are supposed indeed to be happy, but in real truth are unhappy. For the things which oppose their happiness are numerous, envy, discontent, emulation, continual strife, irreconcileable enmities lasting till death, hostilities handed down in succession to one's children's children—a destiny not at all to be desired. Very necessarily therefore did the divinely inspired prophet represent that vain glory as dying in the very act of bringing forth; for says he, "Rachel died, having had a bad delivery."* Since, in truth and reality, the sowing and generation of vain glory perceptible by the outward senses is the death of the soul.

XVI. And what shall we say of the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh? Are they not, in strict accordance with nature, compared to the two eldest sons of Jacob, Reuben and Simeon? For the scripture says, "Thy two sons who were born in Egypt, before that I came into Egypt, belong to me; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be to me as Reuben and as Simeon."† Let us now then see in what manner the one pair are likened to the other pair.

Reuben is the symbol of a good natural disposition, for the name being interpreted means, "A seeing son;" since every one who is endowed with tolerable acuteness of mind and a good disposition is capable of seeing; and Ephraim, as we have already frequently said in other places, is a symbol of memory, for his name being interpreted signifies, "productiveness of fruit," and the most excellent fruit of the soul is memory; and there is no one thing so nearly akin to another as remembering is to a man of good natural endowments. Again, the name of Simeon is a symbol of learning and instruction; for, being interpreted, it signifies "listening," and it is the especial part of a learner to listen and attend to what is said. But Manasseh is a symbol of "recollection," for thus that art is called, from forgetfulness; for it must of ne-

* Genesis xxxv. 16. † Genesis xlviii. 5.

cessity happen to the man who has advanced out of forgetfulness to recollect, and recollecting especially belongs to learning, for very often his notions escape from the man who is learning, as out of weakness he is unable to retain them, and then again they return to him as at the beginning.

The condition therefore which arises from this escaping of his notions is denominated forgetfulness, and that which arises from their returning to him is called recollection. Now is not memory very naturally spoken of as connected with good natural endowments, and recollection as akin to learning? And, indeed, the same relation which Simeon bears to Reuben, that is to say, learning to natural endowment, the same does Manasseh bear to Ephraim, and the same does recollection bear to memory. For as the man of good natural endowments is better than he who is only a learner, for the one resembles the sense of seeing, the other that of hearing, and hearing is always reckoned as entitled to a lesser honour than seeing; so also, he who is endowed with a good memory is at all times superior to him who only recollects, because the one is combined with forgetfulness, but the other continues unalloyed and unadulterated from beginning to end.

XVII. And indeed the scriptures at one time call the father-in-law of the first of the prophets Jother, and at another time Raguel-Jother, when pride is flourishing and at its height; for the name Jother being interpreted means "superfluous," and pride is superfluous in an honest and sincere life, turning into ridicule, as it does, all that is equal and necessary to life, and honouring the unequal things of excess and covetousness. This passion honours human things above divine, and customs above laws, and profane above sacred things, and mortal above immortal things, and, in short, appearances above reality; and it even ventures of its own accord to pass on into the rank of counsellors, suggesting to the wise man not to teach those things which alone are worthy to be known, namely, "the commandments of God, and the law,"* but to study the covenants and contracts of men with one another, which are almost the causes of the society which exists among them being so little sociable.

But the great man is obedient in all things, thinking that little things are adapted to little people, and that great things

* Exodus xviii. 11.

are justly added to the great; but very often this man who is wise in his own conceit, and who, passing over from the herds which the blind had assigned to him for him to guide, having sought out the divine herd, becomes no small portion of it; admiring the leader of nature, and marvelling at his way of leading which he employs in his care of his own flocks, for the name Raguel being interpreted, signifies the "pastoral care of God."*

XVIII. The main part has now been explained; we will now proceed to adduce the proofs. In the first place the scripture represents him as the cultivator of judgment and of justice, for the name Midian, being interpreted, means "out of judgment." And this is said in a twofold sense, for some times it signifies both selection and rejection, such as usually happens to those who are competitors in those contests which are called sacred; for numbers as they appear not qualified, are rejected by the masters of the games. These are the men who have been initiated in the unholy rites of Beelphegor,† and having widened all the mouths of the body to enable them to receive the streams which are poured into them from without, for the name Beelphegor is interpreted "the mouth above the skin," for they have overwhelmed the mind, the governor of the body, and have sunk it down to the lowest depth, so that it can never emerge, nor even hold up its head in ever so slight a degree.

And it suffered this until Phinehas, the lover of peace and manifest priest of God, came as a champion of his own accord, being by nature a hater of all that is evil, and filled with an admiration and desire for what is good; and as he took a coadjutor, that is to say, the well sharpened and sharp-edged word, competent to investigate and examine everything, he could not be deceived, but exerting a vigorous strength, he pierced passion through her womb, that it might not hereafter bring forth any divinely caused evil. Now between these men and the seeing race there is a terrible war, in which no one of the combatants differed in language,‡ but each returned home unwounded and safe, crowned with the garlands of victory.

XIX. This now is one of the things which are shown by the name of Midian; another is that more excellent and judicial species which by the affinity of marriage is connected with the

* Exodus ii. 18. † Numbers xxv. 1. ‡ Exodus xxxi. 29.

prophetic race. The scripture then says, "The priest of judgment and justice" (that is to say, of Midian) "has seven daughters;"* by which seven daughters are frequently intimated the powers of the irrational part of the soul, the power of generation and the voice, and the five outward senses, tending the flocks of their father; for by means of these seven powers it is that all the progresses and increases of their father, the mind, exist in the perceptions which are produced from him. These, then, coming each to its appropriate object, the power of sight to colours and shapes, the sense of hearing to sounds, the faculty of smelling to scents, taste to flavours, and all the other faculties to those objects which are adapted for their exercise do in a manner imbibe some of the external objects of the outward senses, until they have filled all the channels of the soul, and from these channels they give drink to the sheep of their father; I mean by these sheep that most pure flock of the reason which bears safety and ornament at the same time.

But the companions of envy and jealousy, the leaders of the wicked herd coming up, drive them away from that use of their powers which is in accordance with nature, for some conduct these things which are without, inwards to the mind as to a judge and a king, in order that they may do well from having the most excellent of governors; but others take the opposite side, pursuing and proclaiming the exact contrary, while it is possible for the mind to be drawn towards them, and to give up the flock which was entrusted to it to feed.† Until the good disposition, devoted to virtue and inspired by God, which for awhile has appeared to be resting in inactivity, by name Moses, holds his shield over them and defends them from those who would attack them, nourishing the flock of his father on wholesome words, and they having escaped the attack of the enemies of intellect who admire only the external appendages, like people in tragedies, go no longer to Jother but to Raguel, for they have abandoned all connection with pride, and have connected themselves with lawful persuasion, choosing to become a portion of the sacred flock, of

* Exodus ii. 16.

† *This passage is very corrupt in the original. I have followed Mangey in adopting the corrections of Maraland.*

which the divine word is the leader, as his name shows, for it signifies the pastoral care of God.

XX. But while he is taking care of his own flock, all kinds of good things are given all at once to those of the sheep who are obedient, and who do not resist his will; and in the Psalms we find a song in these words, "The Lord is my shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing;"* therefore the mind which has had the royal shepherd, the divine word, for its instructor, will very naturally ask of his seven daughters, "Why is it that you have contended with such great haste to come hither this day?"† for formerly, when you met with the objects of the outward sense, remaining a long time outside, you were a long time in returning again by reason of the manner in which you were allured by them, but now I do not know what it is that has happened to you, but you are speedy in your return, contrary to your usual custom.

Therefore they will say that there were not the same causes why they should run back with such exceeding speed, making the double course from the objects of the outward sense and to the objects of the outward sense, without stopping to take breath, and with excessive impetuosity; but that the cause was rather the man who delivered them from the shepherds of the wild flock.

And they call Moses an Egyptian, a man who was not only a Hebrew, but even a Hebrew of the very purest race, of the only tribe which is consecrated, because they are unable to rise above their own nature; for the outward senses, being on the confines between the objects of the intellect and those of the outward senses, we must be content if they aim at both of them, and are not allured by the objects of the outward sense alone. And to think that they are inclined only to attend to the things which are purely objects of the intellect is great folly; on which account they give him both these names, since when they call him a man, they indicate the things which are within the province of reason alone to contemplate, and when they call him an Egyptian, they indicate the objects of the external senses.

When he has heard this, he will again inquire, "Where is the man?" In what part of you is the reasonable species dwelling? Why have you left it so easily, and have not rather

* Psalm xxiii. 1. † Exodus ii. 18.

after having once met with it, preserved that which was the most beautiful of possessions, and the most advantageous for yourselves? But even if you have not done so before, at least call it to you now, that it may eat of and be supported by your improvement and your close connection with him; for perhaps he will even dwell with you, and will bring with him the winged, and divinely inspired, and prophetical race by name Zipporah.

XXI. Thus much we have thought fit to say on this subject. But, moreover, Moses also changes the name of Hosea into that of Joshua; displaying by his new name the distinctive qualities of his character; for the name Hosea is interpreted, "what sort of a person is this?" but Joshua means, "the salvation of the Lord," being the name of the most excellent possible character; for the habits are better with respect to those persons who are of such and such qualities from being influenced by them: as, for instance, music is better in a musician, physic in a physician, and each art of a distinctive quality in each artist, regarded both in its perpetuity, and in its power, and in its unerring perfection with regard to the objects of its speculation. For a habit is something everlasting, energising, and perfect; but a man of such and such a quality is mortal, the object of action, and imperfect. And what is imperishable is superior to what is mortal, the efficient cause is better than that which is the object of action; and what is perfect is preferable to what is imperfect. In this way the coinage of the above mentioned description was changed and received the stamp of a better kind of appearance.

And Caleb himself was changed wholly and entirely; "For," as the scripture says, "a new spirit was in him;"* as if the dominant part in him had been changed into complete perfection; for the name Caleb, being interpreted, means, "the whole heart." And a proof of this is to be gathered from the fact that the mind is changed, not by being biassed and inclining in one particular direction or the other, but wholly and entirely in the direction which is good; and that, even if there is any thing which is not very praiseworthy indeed, it makes that to depart by arguments conducive to repentance; for, having in this manner washed off all the defilements which

* Numbers xiv. 24.

polluted it, and having availed itself of the baths and purifications of wisdom, it must inevitably look brilliant.

XXII. But it happens to the arch-prophet to have many names: for when he interprets and explains the oracles which are delivered by God, he is called Moses; and when he prays for and blesses the people, he is called the man of God;* and when Egypt is paying the penalty of its impious actions, he is then denominated the god of him who is king of the country, namely, of Pharaoh.† And why is all this? Because to alter a code of laws for the advantage of those who are to use them is the part of a man who is always handling divine things, and having them in his hands; and who is called a lawgiver by the all-knowing God, and who has received from him a great gift —the interpretation of the sacred laws, and the spirit of prophecy in accordance with them. For the name Moses, being translated, signifies "gain," and it also means handling, for the reasons which I have already enumerated. But to pray and to bless are not the duties of any ordinary man, but they belong to one who has not admitted any connection with created things, but who has devoted himself to God, the governor and the father of all men. And any one must be content to whom it has been allowed to use the privilege of blessing. And to be able also to procure good for others belongs to a greater and more perfect soul, and is the profession of one who is really inspired by God, which he who has attained to may reasonably be called God.

But, also, this same person is God, inasmuch as he is wise, and as on this account he rules over every foolish person, even if such foolish person be established and strengthened by a haughty sceptre, and be ever so proud on this account; for the Ruler of the universe, even though some persons are about to be punished for intolerable acts of wickedness, nevertheless is willing to admit some intercessors to mediate on their behalf, who, in imitation of the merciful power of the father, exercise their power of punishment with more moderation and humanity; but to do good is the peculiar attribute of God.

XXIII. Having now discussed at sufficient length the subject of the change and alteration of names, we will turn to the matters which come next in order in our proposed examination. Immediately after the events which we have just mentioned,

* Deuteronomy xxxiii. 1. † Exodus vii. 1.

came the birth of Isaac; for after God had given to his mother the name of Sarrah instead of Sarah, he said to Abraham, "I will give unto thee a son."* We must consider each of the things here indicated particularly. Now he who is properly said to give any thing whatever must by all means be giving what is his own private property. And if this is true beyond controversy, then it would follow that Isaac must not have been a man, but a being synonymous with that most exquisite joy of all pleasures, namely, laughter, the adopted son of God, who gave him as a soother and cheerer to the most peace-loving souls; for it is absurd to suppose that there was one who was a man, and another of whom bastard and illegitimate offspring were descended: and, indeed, Moses calls the man of an intellect devoted to virtue a god, when he says, "The Lord, seeing that Leah was hated, opened her womb."† For having felt compassion and pity for virtue as being hated by the race of mankind, and for the soul which loves virtue, he makes the nature which loves beauty barren, but opens the fountain of fecundity and gives it a prosperous labour.

But Tamar, when she became pregnant of divine seeds, and did not know who it was who had sown them (for it is said that at that time she "had covered her face," as Moses did when he turned away, having a reverential fear of beholding God), still when she saw the tokens and the evidences and decided within herself that it was not a mortal man who gave these things, cried out, "To whomsoever these things belong, it is by him that I am with child."‡ Whose was the ring, or the pledge, or the seal of the whole, or the archetypal appearance, according to which all the things, though devoid of species and of distinctive quality, were all stamped and marked? And whose again was the armlet, or the ornament; that is to say, destiny, the link and analogy of all things which have an indissoluble connection? Whose, again, was the staff, the thing of strong support, which wavers not, which is not moved; that is to say, admonition, correction, instruction? Whose is the sceptre, the kingly power? does it not belong to God alone? Therefore, the disposition inclined to confession, that is to say, Judah, being pleased at her possessed and inspired condition, speaks freely, saying, "She has spoken justly,

* *Genesis xvii. 16.* † Genesis xxix. 31. ‡ Genesis xxxviii. 25.

because I gave her in marriage to no mortal man;"* thinking it an impious thing to pollute divine with profane things.

XXIV. And wisdom, which, after the fashion of a mother, has conceived and brought forth the self-taught race, points out that it is God who is the sower of it; for, after the offspring is brought forth, she speaks magnificently, saying, "The Lord has caused me laughter;"† an expression equivalent to, he has fashioned, he has made, he has begotten Isaac, since Isaac is the same with laughter. But it does not belong to every one to hear this sound, since the evil of superstition is very widely spread among us, and has overwhelmed many unmanly and ignoble souls; on which account she adds, "For whoever hears this will not rejoice with me." As if those persons were very few whose ears are opened and pricked up so as to be inclined to the reception of these sacred words, which teach that it is the peculiar employment of the only God to sow and to beget what is good; to which words all other persons are deaf.

And I know that this illustrious oracle was formerly delivered from the mouth of the prophet, "Thy fruit has been found from me: who is wise and will understand these things? who is prudent and will know them?"‡ But I have observed, and comprehended, and admired him who causes to resound, and who himself, invisible as he is, does in an invisible manner strike the organ of the voice; being amazed also at the same time at what was uttered. For if there be any good thing among existing things, that, or I should rather say the whole heaven and the whole world, if one must tell the truth, is the fruit of God; being preserved upon his eternal and ever-flourishing nature as upon a tree. But it belongs to wise and understanding men to understand and to confess such things as these, and not to the ignorant.

XXV. We have now then explained what is meant by the words, "I will give unto thee." We must now explain the words, "out of her." Some now have understood them as meaning that which exists out of her, thinking that it has been most correctly decided by right reason that the soul never displays any peculiar beauty of its own, but only such as comes to it from without, in accordance with the greatness of the good will of God who showers his graces upon it. But others

* Genesis xxxviii. 26. † Genesis xxi. 6. ‡ Hosea xiv 9.

understand these words to mean instant rapidity; for that the words (ἐξ αυτῆς, which we have translated) "out of her," are here equivalent to, "at once, immediately, without any delay, without hesitation." And it is in this way that the gifts of God usually come to men, outstripping the differences of time.

There is a third class of persons who say, that virtue is the mother of all created good, without having received the seed of it from any mortal man; and to those who ask, whether she who is barren has an offspring (for the holy scriptures, which some time ago represented Sarrah as barren, now confess that she will become a mother); this answer must be given, that a woman who is barren cannot, in the course of nature, bring forth an offspring, just as a blind man cannot see, nor a deaf man hear; but that the soul, which is barren of bad things, and which is unproductive of immoderate license of the passions and vices, is alone very nearly attaining to a happy delivery, bringing forward objects worthy of love, namely, the number seven, according to the hymn which is sung by Grace, that is, by Hannah, who says, "she who was barren hath borne seven, and she who had many children has become weak:"* and what she means by, "She who had many chil dren," is the mind, which being pregnant of mixed and promiscuous reasonings, from all quarters confused together, by reason of the multitudes which crowd around her, and of the disorder which they cause, brings forth incurable evils; and by "she who was barren," she means that mind which had never received any mortal seed, as if it were productive of offspring, but has avoided and shunned all association and all connection with the wicked, and clings to the seventh, and to the most peaceful numbers in accordance with it, for it deserves to be pregnant of it, and to be called its mother.

XXVI. This then is the meaning of the words, "out of her." We must now consider the third point, namely, what that is which is called her son. In the first place, then, there is this worthy of our admiration, that God does not say that he will give her many children. but that he will give her one only. And why is this? Because it is the nature of what is good to be investigated, not so much with respect to its number or magnitude, as with respect to its power; for musical precepts, to take them for an instance, or rules of

* 1 Samuel ii. 5.

grammar, or of geometry, or of justice, or of wisdom, or of manly courage, or of temperance, are very numerous indeed; but the science itself of music, or grammar, or geometry, and still more the virtue of justice, or temperance, or wisdom, or manly courage, is only one thing, the loftiest perfection, in no respect differing from the archetypal model, after which all those numerous and countless precepts were formed.

And this is why he only says that he will give her one son. And now he has called it a son, not speaking carelessly or inconsiderately, but for the sake of showing that it is not a foreign, nor a supposititious, nor an adopted, nor an illegitimate child, but a legitimate child, a proper citizen, inasmuch as a foreign child cannot be the offspring of a truly citizen soul, for the Greek word τέκνον (son), is derived from τόκος (bringing forth), by way of showing the kindred by which children are, by nature, united to their parents.

XXVII. And, says God, "I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations;"* because, not only is generic virtue divided into its proximate species, and into individuals subordinate to the species, as if into nations; but also because, as there are nations of living animals, so in a manner are there nations of things, to which virtue is a very great advantage; for all things which are devoid and destitute of wisdom are mischievous, just as all places upon which the sun does not shine are of necessity dark; for it is by virtue that a farmer is able to pay better attention to his crops, and by virtue that a charioteer drives his chariot in the horse-races so as to avoid falling; and by virtue too, that a pilot and a steersman guides his vessel in its voyage. Virtue again has caused houses, and cities, and countries to be inhabited in a better manner, making men competent to manage houses and cities, and fit to associate with one another. Virtue also has introduced most excellent laws, and has sown the seeds of peace everywhere: since, from the contrary habit, things of a contrary character do naturally arise—war, lawlessness, bad constitutions, confusion, unsuccessful voyages, overthrows, that which, in science, is the most grievous of all diseases, namely, cunning, from which, instead of art, all kinds of evil artifice has flowed. Very necessarily, therefore, will virtue be divided among all nations, which are large and collected systems of

* Genesis xvii. 16.

living beings and things taken together, for the advantage of those who receive her.

XXVIII. Immediately afterwards it is said, "And kings of the nations shall be born of her." For those with whom she is pregnant and whom she brings forth are all rulers; not because they have been elected as such for a short period by lot, which is an uncertain thing, or by the show of hands of men who are for the most part bribed, but because they have been destined and appointed so for everlasting by nature herself. And these are not my words only, but those of the most holy scriptures, in which certain persons are introduced as saying to Abraham, "Thou art a king from God among us;"* not out of consideration for his resources (for what resources could a man have who was an emigrant and who had no city to inhabit, but who was wandering over a great extent of impassable country?), but because they saw that he had a royal disposition in his mind, so that they confessed, in the words of Moses, that he was the only wise king.

For in real truth the wise man is the king of those who are foolish, since he knows what he ought and what he ought not to do; and the temperate man is the king of the intemperate, as he has attained to no careless or inaccurate knowledge of what relates to choice and avoidance. Also the brave man is king over the cowardly, inasmuch as he has thoroughly learnt what he ought to endure and what he ought not. So too the just man is king of the unjust, as he is possessed of the knowledge of undeviating equality as to what is to be distributed. And the holy man is king over the unholy, as he is possessed with the most just and excellent notions of God.

XXIX. It was natural then for the mind, being puffed up by these promises, to be elated and raised to an undue height in its own estimation; and accordingly, by way of producing conviction in us, who were accustomed to hold up our heads at the slightest trifles, "it falls down and immediately laughs the laughter of the soul," looking mournful as to its face, but smiling in its mind a great and unmixed joy having entered into it: and both these feelings, namely, to laugh and also to fall, do at the same time occur to a wise man who inherits good things beyond his expectation; the one being his fate, as a proof that he is not over-proud because of his thorough

* Genesis xxiii. 6.

knowledge of his mortal nothingness; and the other, by way of a confirmation of his piety on account of his looking upon God as the sole cause of all graces and of all good things.

Let, then, the creature fall down and wear a melancholy countenance very naturally; for it has no stability in its own nature, and as far as that goes is easily dissolved; but let it be raised up again by God, and laugh, for he alone is the support and joy of it.

And here any one may reasonably express a doubt how it is possible for any one to laugh when laughter had not as yet come among one branch of the creation; for Isaac is laughter, who, according to the account under our consideration at present, was not yet born. For just as it is impossible to see without eyes, or to hear without ears, or to smell without nostrils, or to exert any other of the external senses without the organs adapted to each respectively, or to comprehend without the reason, so also it is not likely that a person can have laughed, if laughter had not as yet been made. What, then, are we to say? Nature foreshows many of the things which are hereafter to happen by certain symbols. Do you not see how the young bird, before it commits itself to the air, is fond of fluttering its wings and shaking its pinions, giving a previous happy indication of its hope that it will be able to fly? And have you never seen a lamb, or a kid, or an ox, while still young, and before his horns are as yet grown and noticed, if by chance any one irritates him, how he opposes him, and moves forward to defend himself with those parts in which nature has planted his arms for defence? And in the battles which take place with wild beasts, the bulls do not at once gore the adversaries who are opposed to them, but standing well apart, and relaxing their neck in a moderate degree and bending their heads on one side, and looking fierce, as it were, they then, after a truce, rush on with the determination of persevering in the contest. And this sort of conduct those who are in the habit of inventing new words call "sparring," being a sort of sham attack before the real one.

XXX. And the soul is subject to many things of much the same kind. For when something good is hoped for it rejoices beforehand, so that in a manner it rejoices before its joy, and is delighted before its delight. And one may also compare this to what happens with respect to plants; for they, too,

when they are about to bear fruit, bud beforehand and flower previously, and are green previously.

Look at the cultivated vine, how marvellously it is furnished by nature with young shoots, and tendrils, and suckers, and leaves redolent of wine, which, though they utter no voice, do nevertheless indicate the joy of the tree at the coming fruit. And the day also laughs in anticipation of the early dawn, when the sun is about to rise; for one ray is a messenger of another, and one beam of light, as the forerunner of another though more obscure, is still a herald of that which shall be brighter.

Therefore, joy accompanies a good when it is already arrived, and hope while it is expected. For we rejoice when it is come, and we hope while it is coming; just as is the case also with the contrary feelings; for the presence of evil brings us grief, and the expectation of evil generates fear, and fear is nothing more than grief before grief, as hope is joy before joy. For the same relation that, I imagine, fear bears to grief, that same does hope bear to joy. And the external senses afford very manifest proofs of what has now been said; for smell, sitting as it were in front of taste, pronounces judgment beforehand on almost every thing which is eaten and drunk; from which fact some persons have very felicitously named it the foretaster, having a regard to its employment. And so hope is by nature adapted to have as it were a foretaste of the coming good: and to represent it to the soul, which is to have a firm possession of it.

Moreover, when any one who is engaged in a journey is hungry or thirsty, if he on a sudden sees a fountain or all kinds of trees weighed down with eatable fruits, he is at once filled with a hope of enjoyment, not only before he has either eaten or drunk, but before he has either come near them or gathered of them. And do we then think that we are able to feast on the nourishment of the body before we receive it, but that the food of the mind is not able to render us cheerful beforehand, even when we are on the very point of feasting on it?

XXXI. He laughed then very naturally, even though laughter did not as yet appear to have been scattered among the human race: and not only did he laugh but the woman also laughed; for it is said presently, "And Sarrah laughed in

herself, saying, There has never up to the present time come any good unto me of its own accord without care on my part; but he who has promised is my Lord, and is older than all creation, and him I must of necessity believe." And at the same time it also teaches us that virtue is naturally a thing to be rejoiced at, and that he who possesses it is at all times rejoiced; and, on the contrary, that vice is a painful thing, and that he who possesses that is most miserable.

And do we even now marvel at those philosophers who affirm that virtue consists in apathy? For, behold, Moses is found to be the leader of this wise doctrine, as he represents the good man as rejoicing and laughing. And in other passages he not only speaks of him in that way, but also of all those who come to the same place with him; for he says, "And when he seeth thee he will rejoice in himself;"* as if the bare sight of a good man were by itself sufficient to fill the mind with cheerfulness while the soul would cast off its most fearful burden, sorrow.

But it is not allowed to every wicked man to rejoice, as it is said in the predictions of the prophet, "There is no rejoicing for the wicked, says God."† For this is truly a divine saying and oracle, that the life of every wicked man is melancholy, and sad, and full of unhappiness, even if with his face he pretends to feel happiness; for I should not say that the Egyptians rejoiced in reality when they heard that the brethren of Joseph were come, but that they only feigned joy, putting on a false appearance like hypocrites; for no convictor, when standing by and pressing upon a foolish man is a pleasure to him, just as no physician is to an intemperate man who is sick; for labour attends on what is useful, and laziness on what is hurtful. And those who prefer laziness to labour are very naturally hated by those who advise them to a course which will be useful and laborious.

When, therefore, you hear that "Pharaoh and all his servants rejoiced on account of the arrival of Joseph's brethren,"‡ do not think that they rejoiced in reality, unless perhaps in this sense, that they expected that he would become changed from the good things of the soul in which he had been brought up, and would come over to the profitless appe-

* Exodus iv. 14. † Isaiah xlviii. 22. ‡ Genesis xlv. 16.

tites of the body, having adulterated the ancient and hereditary coinage of that virtue which was akin to him.

XXXII. The mind, then, which is devoted to pleasure, having entertained these hopes, does not think that it is sufficient to attract the younger men, and those who are as yet only attending the schools of temperance, by its allurements; but it looks upon it as a terrible thing, if it cannot also bring over the elder reasoning, the more impetuous passions of which have now passed their prime; for in a subsequent passage Joseph says to them, proposing injuries to them as though they were benefits, "Now, therefore, bringing with you your father and all your possessions, come hither to me;"* speaking in this way of Egypt and of that terrible king who drags back all our paternal inheritance and the good things which really belong to us and which have advanced beyond the body (for by nature they are free), endeavouring by force to surrender them to a very bitter prison, having, as the holy scripture tells us, "appointed as guardian of the prison Pentaphres, the eunuch and chief cook,"† who was a man in great want of all that is good, and who had been deprived of the generative parts of the soul; and who was also unable to sow and to plant any of those things which bear upon instruction; but who like a cook slew the living animals, and cut them up and divided them in different portions limb by limb, and who wallowed about in dead and lifeless bodies and things equally, and who, by his superfluous preparations and refinements, excited and stirred up the appetites of the profitless passions, which it was natural to expect that those who were able to tame them should mollify. And he also says, "I will give unto you of all the good things of Egypt, and you shall eat of the marrow of the earth."‡

But we will say unto him, We who keep our eyes fixed on the good things of the soul do not desire those of the body. For that most delicious desire of the former things, when once implanted in the mind, is well calculated to engender a forgetfulness of all those things which are dear to the flesh

XXXIII. Something like this, then, is the falsely named joy of the foolish. But the true joy has already been described, which is adapted only to the virtuous, "Therefore, falling

* *Genesis xlv. 18.* † Genesis xxxix. 1. ‡ Genesis xlv. 18.

down, he laughed."* Not falling from God, but from himself; for he stood near the unchangeable God, but he fell from his own vain opinion. On which account that pride which was wise in its own conceit, having been thrown down, and the feeling which is devoted to God having been raised in its place, and being established around the only unalterable being, he, immediately laughing, said in his mind, "Shall a child be born to one who is a hundred years old, and shall Sarrah, who is ninety years old, have a child?" Do not fancy, my good friend, that that word, "he said" not with his mouth but "in his mind,"† has been added for no especial use; on the contrary, it is inserted with great accuracy and propriety. Why so? Because it seems by his saying, "Shall a child be born to him who is a hundred years old?" that he had a doubt about the birth of Isaac, in which he was previously stated to believe; as what was predicted a little before showed, speaking thus, "This child shall not be thy heir, but he who shall come out of thee;" and immediately afterward he says, "Abraham believed in the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness."

Since then it was not consistent for one who had already believed to doubt, he has represented the doubt as of no long continuance, extending only as far as the mouth and the tongue, and stopping there at the mind which is endowed with such celerity of motion; for, says the scripture, "he said in his mind," which nothing, and no person ever so celebrated for swiftness of foot, could ever be able to outstrip, since it outruns even all the winged natures; on which account the most illustrious of all the Greek poets appears to me to have said:—

"Swift as a winged bird or fleeter thought."‡

Showing by these words the exceeding speed of its promptitude, placing the thought after the winged bird as a sort of climax; for the mind advances at the same moment to very many things and bodies, hurrying on with indescribable impetuosity, and without a moment's lapse of time it speeds at once to the borders of both earth and sea, bringing together and dividing infinite magnitudes by a single word; and at the same time it soars to such a height above the earth, that it penetrates

* Genesis xvii. 17. † Genesis xvii. 20.
‡ Homer. Odyssey viii. 171.

through the air and reaches even the æther, and scarcely stops at the very furthest circle of the fixed stars.

For the fervid and glowing heat of that region does not suffer it to rest tranquil; on which account, overleaping many things, it is borne far beyond every boundary perceptible by the outward senses, to that which is compounded of ideas and appearances by the law of kindred. On which account in the good man there is a slight change, indivisible, unapportionable, not perceptible by the outward senses, but only by the intellect, and being in a manner independent of them.

XXXIV. But, perhaps, some one may say, What then? is he who has once believed bound never to admit the slightest trace, or shadow, or moment of incredulity at all? But this man appears to me to have nothing else in his mind except an idea of proving the creature uncreated, and the mortal immortal, and the corruptible incorruptible, and man, if it be lawful to say so, God. For he says that the belief which man has once conceived ought to be so firm as in no respect to differ from that which is entertained of the truly living God and which is complete in every part; for Moses, in his greater hymn, says, "God is faithful, and there is no unrighteousness in him."* And it is great folly to fancy that the soul of man is able to contain the virtues of God, which never vary and which are established on the most solid footing; for it is sufficient, and one must be content to have been able to acquire the images of them, though they are inferior to the archetypal patterns by many and large numbers. And is not this reasonable? for it follows of necessity that the virtues of God must be pure and unmixed, since God is not a compound being, inasmuch as he is a single nature; on the other hand, the virtues of men must be mixed with some alloy, since we ourselves are compounds, the divine and human nature being combined in us, and adapted together according to the principles of perfect music; and that which is composed of many separate things has a natural attraction to each of its parts. But he is happy to whom it has happened that for the greater portion of his life he has inclined towards the more excellent and more divine part; for that he should have done so all his life is impossible, since at times the mortal weight which is *opposed to* him has preponderated in the opposite scale, and

* Deuteronomy xxxii. 4.

impending over his mind, has kept watch for the opportunities of coming upon his reason at an unfavourable time, so as to drag it back again.

XXXV. Abraham therefore believed in God; but he believed as a man; that you may be aware of the peculiar attribute of mortals, and may learn that his fall did not happen to him in any other way than in consequence of the ordinances of nature. And if it was of short duration and only momentary, it is a thing to be thankful for: for many other men have been so overturned by the violence and impetuosity of error, and by its irresistible force, that they have been utterly destroyed for ever. For know, my good man, that, according to the most holy Moses, virtue is not perfect in the human body, but it suffers something like torpor, and is often ever so little lame. For says the scripture, "The broader part of his thigh became torpid, on which he was lame."* And perhaps some man of an over-confident disposition may come forward and say that this is not the language of one who disbelieves, but of one praying, so that if that most excellent of all the happy feelings were about to be produced, it would not be brought forth according to any other number than that of ninety years, that so the perfect good might arrive at its production according to perfect numbers.

But the aforesaid numbers are perfect, and especially according to the sacred scriptures. And let us consider each of them: now first of all there is the son of the just Noah and the ancestor of the seeing race, and he is said to have been a hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad,† and the meaning of the name Arphaxad is, "he disturbed sorrow." At all events it is a good thing that the offspring of the soul should confuse, and disorder, and destroy that miserable thing iniquity, so full of evils.

But Abraham also planted a field,‡ using the ratio of an hundred for the measurement of the ground: and Isaac found some barley yielding a hundred fold.§ And Moses also made the vestibule of the sacred tabernacle in a hundred arches,‖ measuring out the distance towards the east and towards the west. Moreover the ratio of a hundred is the first fruit of

* Genesis xxxii. 25.
† Genesis xi. 10.
‡ Genesis xxi. 33.
§ Genesis xxvi. 12.
‖ Exodus xxvii. 9.

the first fruit which the Levites assign to those who are consecrated to the priesthood;* for after they have taken the tenths from the nation they are enjoined to give unto the priests a sacred tenth of the whole share, as if from their own possessions. And if a person were to consider, he might find many other instances to the praise of the aforesaid number brought forward in the law of Moses, but for the present what have been enumerated are sufficient. But if from the hundred you set aside the tenth part as a sacred first fruit to God who produces, and increases, and brings to perfection the fruit of the soul—for how can it be anything but perfcet, inasmuch as it is on the confines between the first and the tenth, in the same manner in which the Holy of Holies is separated by the veil in the middle . .† by which those things which are of the same genus are divided according to the differences in species?

XXXVI. Therefore the good man was speaking and saying things which were really good in his mind. But the bad man at times interprets good things in a very excellent manner, but nevertheless does shameful things in a most shameful one, as Shechem does who is the offspring of folly. For he is the son of Hamon his father, and the name Hamon, being trranslated, means "an ass," but the name Shechem means "a shoulder" when interpreted, the symbol of labour. But that labour of which folly is the parent is miserable and full of suffering, as, on the other hand, that labour is useful to which prudence is related. Accordingly the holy scriptures tell us that, "Shechem spake according to the mind of the virgin, having first humbled her."‡ Is it not said then, with great purpose and accuracy, that he spake according to the mind of the damsel, for the purpose of showing distinctly that he acted in a contrary manner to that in which he spoke? For Dinah means incorruptible judgment: justice the attribute seated by God, the everlasting virgin; for the name Dinah, being interpreted, means either thing, judgment or justice.

Fools, then, laying violent hands upon and attempting to defile her, by means of their daily designs and practices, by their plausibility of speech escape conviction. Therefore

* Numbers xviii 28. † There is a hiatus in the text here.
‡ *Genesis xxxiv. 3.*

they must either act in a manner consistent with the language that they hold, or else they must hold their tongues while committing iniquity. For it is said, "Silence is one half of evil:" as Moses says when rebuking the man who accounted the creature worthy of the principal honour, and the immortal God worthy only of the second place, "Thou hast sinned, be silent." For to use bombastic language, and to boast of one's evil deeds, is a double sin: and men in general are very prone to this; for they are constantly saying what is pleasing to the ever-virgin virtue, and such things as are just: but they never omit any opportunity of insulting and violating her when they are able.

For what city is there which is not full of those who are continually celebrating the praises of virtue?—men who weary the ears of those who hear them by everlastingly dwelling on such subjects as these; wisdom is a necessary good; folly is pernicious; temperance is desirable; intemperance is hateful; courage is a thing proper to be cultivated; cowardice must be avoided; justice is advantageous; injustice is disadvantageous; holiness is honourable; unholiness is shameful; piety towards the gods is praiseworthy; impiety is blameable; that which is most akin to the nature of man is to design, and to act, and to speak virtuously; that which is most alien from his nature is to do the contrary of all these things.

By continually stringing together these and similar aphorisms they deceive the courts of justice, and the council chambers, and the theatres, and every assembly and company which they meet; as men who put beautiful masks on ugly faces, with the intention of not being discovered by those who see them. But it is of no use; for some persons will come endowed with great vigour, and occupied with a real zeal and admiration for virtue, and who will strip them of all their coverings, and disguises, and appendages which they had woven round themselves by the evil artifice of plausible speeches, and will display their soul naked by itself as it really is, and will make themselves acquainted with the secret things of their nature which are hidden as it were in recesses. And then having brought to light all its shame and all the reproaches to which it is liable, they will display them in broad daylight to every one, and show what sort of thing it is, how disgraceful and ridiculous, and what a spurious kind of

beauty it has disguised itself with by means of its appendages and coverings.

And those who are prepared to avenge themselves on such profane and impure dispositions are Simeon and Levi,* two indeed in number, but only one in mind; on which account, in his blessings of his sons, their father numbers them together under one classification, on account of the harmonious character of their unanimity and of their violence in one and the same direction. But Moses does not make any mention of them afterwards as a pair, but classes the whole tribe of Simeon under that of Levi, combining together two essences, of which he made one impressed as it were with one idea and appearance, uniting hearing to doing.

XXXVII. When, therefore, the virtuous man knew that the promise was uttering things full of reverence and prudent caution, according to his own mind, he admitted both these feelings into his breast, namely, faith in God, and incredulity as to the creature. Very naturally therefore he says, using the language of entreaty, "Would that this Ishmael might live before thee,"† using each word of those which he utters here with deliberate propriety, namely, the "this," the "might live," the "before thee." For it is no small number of persons who have been deceived by the similarity of the names of different things, and we had better examine here what I am saying.

The name Ishmael, being interpreted, means "the hearing of God," but some men listen to the divine doctrines to their benefit, and others listen to both his admonitions and to those of others only to their destruction. Do you not recollect the case of the soothsayer Balaam?‡ He is represented as hearing the oracles of God, and as having received knowledge from the Most High, but what advantage did he reap from such hearing, and what good accrued to him from such knowledge? In his intention he endeavoured to injure the most excellent eye of the soul, which alone has received such instruction as to be able to behold God, but he was unable to do so by reason of the invincible power of the Saviour; therefore, being overthrown by his own insane wickedness, and having received many wounds, he perished amid the heaps of wounded,§ be-

* Deuteronomy xxxiii. 6.
† Genesis xvii. 18.
‡ Numbers xxiv. 17.
§ Numbers xxxi. 8.

cause he had stamped beforehand the divinely inspired prophecies with the sophistry of the soothsayers.

Very righteously, therefore, does the good man pray that this his only son, Ishmael, may be sound in mind and health, because of those persons who do not listen in a sincere spirit to the sacred admonitions, whom Moses has expressly forbidden to come into the assembly of the Ruler of the universe, for those men are broken as to the generative parts of their minds, or are even rendered completely impotent in that respect, who magnify their own minds, and their external sense, as the only causes of all the events which take place among men; and there are others who are lovers of a system of polytheism, and who honour the company which is devoted to the service of many gods, being the sons of a harlot, having no knowledge of the one husband and father of the virtue-loving soul, namely, God; and are not all these men very properly driven away and banished from the assembly of God? They appear to me very much to resemble those parents who accuse their sons of intemperance in wine, for they say, "This our son is disobedient,"* indicating, by the addition of the word "this," that they have other sons likewise who are temperate and self-denying, and who obey the injunctions of right reason and instruction; for these are the most genuine parents, by whom it is a most disgraceful thing to be accused, and a most glorious thing to be praised.

Then as to the words, "This is Aaron and Moses, whom God directed to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt,"† and the expression, "These are they who conversed with Pharaoh the king." Let us not think that they are used superfluously, or that they do not convey some intimations beyond the mere open meaning of the words; for since Moses is the purest mind, and Aaron is his speech, and moreover, since the mind has been taught to think of divine things in a divine manner, and since the speech has learnt to interpret holy things in holy language, the sophists imitating them, and adulterating the genuine coinage, say, that they also conceive rightly, and speak in a praiseworthy manner about what is most excellent.

In order, therefore, that we may not be deceived by a placing of the base money in juxtaposition with the good, by reason of

* Deuteronomy xxi. 20. † Exodus vi. 26.

the similitude of the impression, he has given us a test by which they may be distinguished. What then is the test? To bring out of the region of the body the mind, endowed with the power of seeing, fond of contemplation and philosophical; for he who can do this is this same Moses; and he who is unable really to do so, but who is only said to be able, and who makes professions with infinite pomp and magnitude of language, is laughed at.

But he prays that Ishmael may live, not meaning to refer to the life in conjunction with the body, but he prays that the divine voice, dwelling for evermore in his soul, may awaken and vivify it.

XXXVIII. And he indeed prays that the hearing of sacred words and the learning of sacred doctrine may live, as has been already said; but Jacob, the practiser of virtue, prays that the good natural disposition may live; for he says, "May Reuben live and not die,"* does he then here pray for immortality for him, a thing impossible for man to attain to? Surely not, we must then explain what it is which he intends to signify. All the lessons and all the admonitions of instruction are built up and established on the nature which is calculated to receive instruction, as on a foundation previously laid; but if there is no natural foundation previously in existence, everything is useless; for men, by nature destitute of sense, would not appear at all to differ from a stock or a lifeless stone; for nothing could possibly be adapted to them so as to cleave to them, but everything would rebound and spring back as from some hard body.

But on the other hand, we may see the souls of those who are well endowed by nature, like a well-smoothed waxen tablet, neither too solid nor too tender, moderately tempered, and easily receiving all admonitions and all lessons, and themselves giving an accurate representation of any impression which has been stamped upon them, being a sort of distinct image of memory.

It was therefore indispensable to pray that a good natural disposition, free from all disease and from all mortality, should be joined to the rational race; for they are but few who partake of the life according to virtue, which is the most real and genuine life. I do not mean of the common herd of men

* Deuteronomy xxxiii. 6.

only, for of them there is not one who partakes of real life: but even of those to whom it has been granted to shun the objects of human desire, and to live to God alone. On which account the practiser of virtue, that courageous man, marvelled greatly, if any one being borne along the middle of the stream of life, was not dragged down by any violence, but was able to withstand the flow of abundant wealth coming over him, and to stem the impetuosity of immoderate pleasure, and to avoid being carried away by the whirlwind of vain opinion.

At all events Jacob does not speak to Joseph more than the sacred scripture speaks to every one who is vigorous in his body, and who is seen to be immersed amid abundant treasures, and riches, and superfluities, and to be overcome by none of them, when he says, "For still thou livest," uttering a most marvellous sentiment, and one which is quite beyond the daily life of us who, if we have fallen in with ever so slight a breeze which bears us towards good fortune, immediately set all sail and become greatly elated, and being full of great and high spirits, hurry forward with all our speed to the indulgence of our passions, and never will check our unbridled and immoderately excited desires until we run ashore and are wrecked as to the whole vessel of our souls.

XXXIX. Very beautifully therefore, do we pray that this Ishmael may live. Therefore, Abraham adds, "May he live before God," looking upon it as the perfection of all happiness for the mind to be accounted worthy of him who is the most excellent of all beings, as its inspector and overseer; for if, while the teacher is present the pupil cannot go wrong, and if a monitor being at hand is of service to the learner, and if while an elder person is present the younger man is adorned by modesty and temperance, and if the presence of his father or of his mother have often prevented a son when about to commit sin, even though they are only beheld by him in silence, then what excess of good must we imagine that man to enjoy, who believes that he is always watched and beheld by God? for while he fears and reverences and looks up to the dignity of him as being present, he will flee from committing iniquity with all his might.

But when he prays that Ishmael may live, he does not despair of the birth of Isaac, as I have already said, but he believes in God; for it does not follow that what it is possible

* Genesis xlv. 28.

for God to give, it is also possible for man to receive, since to God it is easy to give the most numerous and important benefits, but to us it is not easy to accept of the gifts which are proffered to us; for we must be content, if, by means of labour and diligence, we obtain a share of those good things which are familiar and customary to us. But there is no hope that we can attain to those which come of their own accord, and from some ever ready and previously prepared source, without any art, or in short, any human contrivance whatever; for inasmuch as these things are divine, they must of necessity be found out by more divine and unadulterated natures, such as have no connection with any mortal body. And Moses has shown that every one, to the best of his power, ought to make grateful acknowledgments for benefits received; for instance, that the clever man ought to offer up as a sacrifice his acuteness and wisdom; the eloquent man should consecrate all his excellences of speech, by means of psalms and a regular enumeration of the greatness and panegyric on the living God; and to proceed with each species, he who is a natural philosopher should offer up his natural philosophy; he who is a moral philosopher should make an offering of his ethical philosophy; he who is skilful in any art or science should dedicate to God his knowledge of the arts and sciences.

Thus again a sailor and a pilot should dedicate their successful voyage; the agricultural farmer, his productive crops; the stock-farmer, the prolific increase of his flocks and herds; the physician, the good health of his patients; the commander of an army, his success in war; the magistrate or the king will offer up his administration of the laws or his sovereign power. And, in short, the man who is not blinded by self-love, looks upon the only true maker of all things, God, as the cause of all the good things affecting his soul, or body, or his external circumstances. Let no one therefore, of those who seem to be somewhat obscure and humble, from a despair of any better hope, hesitate to become a suppliant to God. But even if he no longer looks forward to any greater advantages, still let him, to the best of his power, give God thanks for the blessings which he has already received, and in effect, those which he has received are countless; his birth, his life, his soul, his food, his outward senses, his imagination, his inclinations, his *reason; and reason* is a very short word, but a most perfect *and admirable thing*, a fragment of the soul of the universe,

or, as it is more pious to say for those who study philosophy according to Moses, a very faithful copy of the divine image.

XL. It is right also to praise those inquirers after truth, who have endeavoured to tear up and carry off the whole trunk of virtue, root and branch: but since they have not been able to do it, have at least taken either a single shoot, or a single bunch of the fruit, as a specimen and portion of the whole tree, being all that they were able to bear.*

It is a desirable thing, indeed, to associate at once with the entire company of the virtues; but if this be too great an indulgence to be granted to human nature, let us be content if it has fallen to our lot to be connected with any one of the particular virtues, as a portion of the whole band, such as temperance, or courage, or justice, or humanity; for the soul may produce and bring forth some good from even one of them, and so avoid being barren and unproductive of any.

But will you impose any such injunctions as these on your own son? Unless you treat your servants with gentleness, do not treat those of the same rank as yourself socially. Unless you behave decorously to your wife, never bear yourself respectfully to your parents. If you neglect your father and your mother, be impious also towards God. If you delight in pleasure, you must not keep aloof from covetousness. Do you desire great riches? Then be also eager for vain-glory. For what more need we add? Need you not desire to be moderate in some things unless you are able to be so in all? Would not your son say to you in such a case, My father, what do you mean? Do you wish your son to become either perfectly good or perfectly bad, and will you not be content if he keeps the middle path between the two extremes? Was it not for this reason that Abraham also, at the time of the destruction of Sodom, began at fifty and ended at ten?†

Therefore, propitiating and supplicating God, entreat him that if there could not be found among his creatures a complete remission so as to give them liberty, of which the sacred number of fifty is a symbol, at least the intermediate instruction which is equal in number to the decade, might be accepted for the sake of the deliverance of the soul which was about to be condemned. But those who are instructed have many more opportunities of prayer than those who are destitute of teachers, and those who are well initiated in encyclical

* Numbers xiii. 25. † Genesis xviii. 32.

accomplishments have more opportunities than those who are unmusical and illiterate, inasmuch as they from their childhood almost have been imbued with all the lessons of virtue, and temperance, and all kinds of excellence. Wherefore, even if they have not entirely got rid of and effaced old marks of iniquity so as to wear a completely clean appearance, at least they have purified themselves in a reasonable and moderate degree.

And it is something like this that Esau seems to have said to his father, "Have you not one blessing for me, O my father? Bless me, bless me, also, O my father!"* For different blessings have been set apart for different persons, perfect blessings for the perfect, and moderate blessings for the imperfect. As is the case also with bodies; for there are different exercises appropriate to those which are in health, and to those which are sick. And also different regimens of food, and different systems of living, and not the same. But some things are suitable to the one kind that they may not become at all diseased; and other things are good for the other sort, that they may be changed and rendered more healthy.

Since, therefore, there are many good things existing in nature, give me that which appears to be best adapted to my circumstances, even if it be the most trifling thing possible; looking at this one point alone, whether I shall be able to bear what is given me with equanimity, and not, like a wretched person, sink under and be overwhelmed by it.

Again, what do we imagine to be meant by the words, "Will not the hand of the Lord be sufficient?"† Do they not signify that the powers of the living God penetrate everywhere for the purpose of conferring benefits, not only on those who are noble, but on those also who appear to be in a more obscure condition, to whom also God gives such things as are suitable to the measure and weight of the soul of each individual, conjecturing and measuring in his own mind with perfect equality what is proportionate to the circumstances and requirements of each.

XLI. But what makes an impression on me in no ordinary degree is the law which is enacted with respect to those who put off their sins and seem to be repentant For this law commands that the first victim which such persons offer shall

* *Genesis xxvii. 28.* † Numbers xi. 23.

be a female sheep without spot. But if, it proceeds, "his hand is not strong enough to bring a sheep, then for the trespass which he has committed he shall bring two turtle doves or two young pigeons, one for his trespass and one for a burnt offering; and if his hand cannot find a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons, then he shall bring as his gift the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall not pour oil upon it, nor shall he place any frankincense thereon, because it is a sin offering; and he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest having taken it from him shall take a full handful of it, and place it as a memorial on the altar."*

God therefore here is propitiated by three different kinds of repentance, by the aforesaid beasts, or by the birds, or by the white flour, according, in short, to the ability of him who is being purified and who repents. For small offences do not require great purifications, nor are small purifications fit for great crimes; but they should be equal, and similar, and in due proportion. It is worth while, therefore, to examine what is meant by this purification which may be accomplished in three ways.

Now it may almost be said that both offences and good actions are perceived to exist in three things; in intention, or in words, or in actions. On which account Moses, teaching in his hortatory admonitions that the attainment of good is not impossible nor even very difficult, says, "It is not necessary to soar up to heaven, nor to go to the borders of the earth and sea, for the attainment of it, but it is near, yea, and very near." † And then in a subsequent passage he shows it all but to the naked eye as one may say, where he says, "Every action is in thy mouth, or in thy heart, or in thy hands:" ‡ meaning under this symbolical expression, in thy words, or in thy designs, or in thy actions. For he means that human happiness consists in wise design, and good language, and righteous actions, just as the unhappiness arises from the contrary course. For both well-doing and wrong-doing exist in the same regions, in the heart, or in the mouth, or in the hand; for some persons decide in the most righteous, and sagacious manner, some speak most excellently, some do only what ought to be done: again, of the three sources of error the most unimportant is to design to do what ought not to be done, the most grievous is to do what is iniquitous, the middle evil is to speak

* Leviticus v. 5. † Deut. xxx. 10. ‡ Deut. xxx. 14.

improperly. But it often happens that even what is least im portant is the most difficult to be removed; for it is very hard to bring an agitated state of the soul to tranquillity; and one may more easily check the impetuosity of a torrent than the perversion of the soul which is hurrying in a wrong direction, without restraint. For innumerable notions coming one upon the other like the waves of a stormy sea, bearing everything along with them, and throwing everything into confusion, overturn the whole soul with irresistible violence.

Therefore the most excellent, and most perfect kind of purification is this, not to admit into one's mind any improper notions, but to regulate it in peace and obedience to law, the ruler of which principles is justice. The next kind is, not to offend in one's language either by speaking falsely, or by swearing falsely, or by deceiving, or by practising sophistry, or by laying false informations; or, in short, by letting loose one's mouth and tongue to the injury of any one, as it is better to put a bridle and an insuperable chain on those members.

XLII. But why it is a more grievous offence to say what is wrong than only to think it, is very easy to see. For some times a person thinks without any deliberate previous intention of so thinking, but inconsiderately: for he is compelled to admit ideas in his mind which he does not wish to admit; and nothing which is involuntary is blameable: but a man speaks intentionally, so that if he utters words which are not proper he is unhappy and is committing offence, since he does not even by chance choose to say anything that is proper, and it would be more for his advantage to adopt that safest expedient of silence: and. in the second place, anyone who is not silent can be silent if he pleases.

But what is even a still more grievous offence than speaking wrongly, is unjust action. For the word, as it is said, is the shadow of the deed; and how can an injurious deed help being more mischievous than a shadow of the same character? On this account Moses released the mind, even when it yielded to many involuntary perversions and errors, from accusations and from penalties. thinking that it was rather acted upon by notions which forced their way into it, than was itself acting.

But whatever goes out through the mouth that he makes the utterer responsible for and brings him before the tribunal, *since the act of speaking* is one which is in our own power. *But the investigation* to which words are subject is a more

moderate one, and that with which words are united is a more vigorous one. For he imposes severe punishments on those who commit gross offences, and who carry out in action, and utter with hasty tongues what they have designed in their unjust minds.

XLIII. Therefore he has called the purifying victims which are to be offered up for the three offenders, the mind, speech, and the action, a sheep, and a pair of turtle doves or pigeons, and the tenth part of a sacred measure of fine flour; thinking it fit that the mind should be purified by a sheep, the speech by winged creatures, and the action by fine flour: Why is this? Because, as the mind is the most excellent thing in us, so also is the sheep the most excellent among irrational animals, inasmuch as it is the most gentle, and also as it gives forth a yearly produce in its fleece, for the use and also for the ornament of mankind. For clothes keep off all injury from both cold and heat, and also they conceal the unmentionable parts of nature, and in this way they are an ornament to those who use them: therefore the sheep, as being the most excellent of animals, is a symbol of the purification of the most excellent part of man, the mind.

And birds are an emblem of the purification of the speech: for speech is a light thing, and winged by nature, flying and penetrating in every direction more swiftly than an arrow. For what is once said can never be re-called;* but being borne abroad, and running on with great swiftness, it strikes the ears and penetrates every sense of hearing, resounding loudly: but speech is of two kinds, one true and the other false; on which account it appears to me to be here compared to a pair of turtle doves or young pigeons: and of these birds one he says is to be looked upon as a sin offering, and one is to be sacrificed as a burnt offering, since the speech which is true is wholly and in all respects sacred and perfect, but that which is false is very wrong and requires correction.

Again, as I have already said, fine flour is a symbol of the purification of activity, but it is sorted from the commoner sort by the hands of the bakers, who make the business their study.

* This resembles what is said by Horace—

Nescit vox missa reverti.—A. P. 390.

And in another place—

Et semel emissum volat irrevocabile verbum.—Epist. I. 18, 71.

On which account the law says, "And the priest having taken an entire handful, shall place it on the altar as a memorial of them," by the word handful, indicating both the endeavour and the action.

And he speaks with exceeding accuracy with respect to the sheep, when he says, "And if his hand be not strong enough to supply a sheep;" but with respect to the birds he says, "And if he cannot find a bird." Why is this? Because it is a sign of very great strength and of excessive power, to get rid of the errors of the mind: but it does not require any great strength, to check the errors of words; for, as I have said already, silence is a remedy for all the offences that can be committed by the voice, and every one may easily practise silence; but yet, by reason of their chattering habits and want of moderation in their language, many people cannot find out how to impose a limitation on their speech.

XLIV. Since then, the virtuous man has been bred up among and practised in these and similar divisions and discriminations of things, does he not rightly appear to pray that Ishmael may live, if he is not as yet able to become the father of Isaac? What then does the merciful God say? To him who asks for one thing he gives two, and on him who prays for what is less he bestows what is greater; for, says the historian, he said unto Abraham, "Yea, behold, Sarrah thy wife shall bring forth a son."* Very felicitous and significant is this answer, "Yea;" for what can be more suitable to and more like the character of God, than to promise good things and to ratify that promise with all speed! But what God promises every foolish man repudiates; therefore the sacred scriptures represent Leah as hated, and on this account it is that she received that name; for Leah, being interpreted, means "repudiating and labouring," because we all turn away from virtue and think it a laborious thing, by reason of its very often imposing commands on us which are not pleasant. But nevertheless, she is thought worthy of such an honourable reception from the prince, that her womb is opened by him, so as to receive the seed of divine generation, in order to the production of honourable pursuits and actions.

Learn therefore, O soul, that Sarrah, that is, virtue, will bring forth to thee a son; and that Hagar, or intermediate

* Genesis xvii. 19.

instruction, is not the only one who will do so; for her offspring is one which has its knowledge from teaching, but the offspring of the other is entirely self-taught. And do not wonder, if God, who brings forth all good things, has also brought forth this race, which, though rare upon the earth, is very numerous in heaven. And you may learn this also from other things of which man consists: do the eyes see from having been taught to do so? And what do the nostrils do? Do they smell by reason of their having learnt? And do the hands touch, or the feet advance, in accordance with the commands or recommendations of instructors? Again, do the appetites and imaginations (and these are the first moving powers and persuasions of the soul) exist in consequence of teaching? And has our mind gone as a pupil to any sophist, in order to learn to think and to comprehend? All these things repudiate all kinds of instruction, and avail themselves only of the spontaneous gifts of nature to exert their appropriate energies.

Why then do you any longer wonder if God showers upon men virtue, unaccompanied by any labour or suffering, such as stand in need of no superintending care or instruction, but is from the very beginning entire and perfect? And if you wish to receive any testimony in corroboration of this view, can you find any more trustworthy than that of Moses? And he says that the rest of mankind derive their food from the earth, but that he alone who is endowed with the power of sight, derives his from heaven. And men occupied in agriculture co-operate to produce the food from the earth; but God, the only cause and giver, rains down the food from heaven without the co-operation of any other being.

And, indeed, we read in the scriptures, "Behold, I rain upon you bread from heaven."* Now what nourishment can the scriptures properly say is rained down, except heavenly wisdom? which God sends from above upon those souls which have a longing for virtue, God who possesses a great abundance and exceeding treasure of wisdom, and who irrigates the universe, and especially so on the sacred seventh day which he calls the sabbath; for then, he says, that there is an influx of spontaneous good things, not rising from any kind of art, but

* Exodus xvi. 4.

shooting up by their own spontaneous and self-perfecting nature, and bearing appropriate fruit.

XLV. Virtue, therefore, will bring thee forth a legitimate male child, far removed from all effeminate passions; and thou shalt call the name of thy son by the name of the passion which thou feelest in regard to him; and thou wilt by all means feel joy; so that thou shalt give him a name which is an emblem of joy, namely, Laughter. As grief and fear have their appropriate expressions which the passion, when more than usually violent and predominant, gives utterance to; so also, good counsels and happiness compel a man to employ a natural expression of them, for which no one could find out more appropriate and felicitous names, even if he were very skilful in the imposition of names. On which account God says, "I have blessed him, I will increase him, I will multiply him, he shall beget twelve nations;"* that is to say, he shall beget the whole circle and ring of the sophistical preliminary branches of education; but I will make my covenant with Israel, that the race of mankind may receive each kind of virtue, the weaker part of them receiving both that which is taught by others, and that which is learnt by one's self, and the stronger part that which is ready and prepared.

XLVI. "And at that time," says he, "she shall bring forth a son to thee;"† that is to say, wisdom shall bring forth joy. What time, O most marvellous being, are you pointing out? Is it that which cannot be indicated by the thing brought forth? For that must be the real time, the rising of the universe, the prosperity and happiness of the whole earth, and of heaven, and of all intermediate natures, and of all animals, and of all plants. On which account Moses also took courage to say to those who had run away, and who did not dare to enter upon a war in the cause of virtue against those who were arrayed against it, "The Lord has departed from them, but the Lord is in us;"‡ for he here almost confesses in express words that God is time, who stands aloof and at a distance from every impious person, but walks among those souls which cultivate virtue. "For," says he, "I will walk among you, and I will be your God."§ But those who say that what is meant by time is only the seasons of the year are misapplying the

* Genesis xvii. 20.
† Genesis xv. 10.
‡ *Numbers xiv. 9.*
§ Leviticus xxvi. 12.

names with great inaccuracy, like men who have not studied the natures of things with any care, but have gone on to a great degree at random.

XLVII. But by way of amplifying the beauty of the creature to be born, he says that it shall be born the next year, indicating by the term, "the next year,"* not a difference of time, such as is measured by lunar or solar periods, but that which is truly marvellous, and strange, and new, being an age which is very different from those which are visible to the eyes and perceptible to the outward senses, being investigated in incorporeal things appreciable only by the intellect, which, in fact, is the model and archetype of time. But an age is a name given to the life of the world, intelligible only by the intellect, as time is that given to the life of the world, perceptible by the outward senses.

And in this year the man who had sown the graces of God so as to produce many more good things, in order that the greatest possible number of persons worthy to share them might participate in them, finds also the barley producing a hundredfold.† But he who has sown does usually also reap. And he sowed, displaying the virtue, the enemy of envy and wickedness; he is, however, here said to find, not to reap. For he who has made the ear of his good deeds more productive and full, was a different person, having laid up an abundance of greater hopes well prepared, and he also proposed more abundant advantages to all those who sought them, encouraging them to hope to find them.

XLVIII. And the words, "He finished speaking to him,"‡ are equivalent to saying, he made his hearer perfect, though he was devoid of wisdom before, and he filled him with immortal lessons. But when his disciple became perfect, the Lord went up and departed from Abraham, showing, not that he separated himself from him; for the wise man is naturally an attendant of God, not wishing to represent the spontaneous inclination of the disciple in order that as he had learnt while his teacher was no longer standing by him, and without any necessity urging him, giving of his own accord a specimen of himself, and displaying a voluntary and spontaneous eagerness to learn, he might for the future exert his energies by himself; for the teacher assigns a model to him who has learnt by

* Genesis xviii. 10. † Genesis xxvi. 12. ‡ Genesis xvii. 22.

voluntary study without any suggestions from other quarters, stamping on him a most durable species of indelible recollection.

A TREATISE

ON THE

DOCTRINE THAT DREAMS ARE SENT FROM GOD.

BOOK I.

I. THE treatise before this one has contained our opinions on those visions sent from heaven which are classed under the first species; in reference to which subject we delivered our opinion that the Deity sent the appearances which are beheld by man in dreams in accordance with the suggestions of his own nature. But in this treatise we will, to the best of our power, describe those dreams which come under the second species.

Now the second species is that in which our mind, being moved simultaneously with the mind of the universe, has appeared to be hurried away by itself and to be under the influence of divine impulses, so as to be rendered capable of comprehending beforehand, and knowing by anticipation some of the events of the future. Now the first dream which is akin to the species which I have been describing, is that which appeared on the ladder which reached up to heaven, and which was of this kind.

"And Jacob dreamed, and behold a ladder was firmly planted on the earth, the head of which reached up to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold there was a ladder firmly planted on the earth, and the Lord was standing steadily upon it; and he said, I am the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: be not afraid. The earth on which thou art sleeping I will give unto thee and unto thy seed, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and it shall be multiplied as the sand on the sea-shore, and shall spread to the south, and to the north, and to the east; and in thee shall all the kindreds of the earth be

blessed, and in thy seed also. And, behold, I am with thee, keeping thee in all thy ways, by whichever thou goest, and I will bring thee again into this land; because I will not leave thee until I have done everything which I have said unto thee."*

But the previous consideration of the circumstances of this vision require that we should examine them with accuracy, and then perhaps we shall be able to comprehend what is indicated by the vision. What, then, are the previous circumstances? The scripture tells us, "And Jacob went up from the well of the oath, and came to Charran, and went into a place and lay down there until the sun arose. And he took one of the stones of the place and placed it at his head, and went to sleep in that place." And immediately afterwards came the dream. Therefore it is well at the outset to raise a question on these three points:—One, What was the well of the oath,† and why was it called by this name? Secondly, What is Charran, and why, after Jacob had departed from the well beforementioned, did he immediately go to Charran? Thirdly, What was the place, and why, when he was in it, did the sun at once set, and did he go to sleep?

II. Let us then at once begin and consider the first of these points. To me, then, the well appears to be an emblem of knowledge; for its nature is not superficial, but very deep. Nor does it lie in an open place, but a well is fond of being hidden somewhere in secret. Nor is it found with ease, but only after great labour and with difficulty; and this too is seen to be the case with sciences, not only with such as have great and indescribable subjects of speculation, but even with respect to such as are the most insignificant. Choose, therefore, whichever art you please; not the most excellent, but even the most obscure of all, which perhaps no one who has been bred a free man in the whole city would ever study of his own accord, and which scarcely any servant in the field would attend to, who, against his will, was a slave to some morose and ill-tempered master who compelled him to do many unpleasant things.

For the matter will be found to be not a simple one, but rather one of great complications and variety, not easy to be seized upon, but difficult to discover, difficult to master, hostile

* Genesis xxviii. 12. † Genesis xxvi. 33.

to delay, and indolence and indifference, full of earnestness and contention, and sweat, and care. For which reason "those who dig in this well say that they cannot find even water in it;" because the ends of science are not only hard to discover, but are even altogether undiscoverable; and it is owing to this that one man is more thoroughy skilled in grammar or in geometry than another, because of its being impossible to circumscribe, increase, and extend one within certain limits; for there is always more that is left behind than what comes to be learnt; and what is left watches for and catches the learner, so that even he who fancies that he has comprehended and mastered the very extremities of knowledge would be considered but half perfect by another person who was his judge, and if he were before the tribunal of truth would appear to be only beginning knowledge; for life is short, as some one has said, but art is long; of which that man most thoroughly comprehends the magnitude, who sincerely and honestly plunges deeply into it, and who digs it out like a well. And such a man, when he is at the point of death, being now grey-headed and exceedingly old, it is said, wept, not that he feared death as being a coward, but out of a desire for instruction, as feeling that he was now, for the first time, entering upon it when he was finally departing from life.

For the soul flourishes for the pursuit of knowledge when the prime vigour of the body is withering away from the lapse of time; therefore, before one has arrived at one's prime and vigour by reason of a more accurate comprehension of things, it is not difficult to be tripped up. But this accident is common to all people who are fond of learning, to whom new subjects of contemplation are continually rising up and striving after old ones, the soul itself producing many such subjects when it is not barren and unproductive. And nature, also, unexpectedly and spontaneously displaying a great number to those who are gifted with acute and penetrating intellects. Therefore the well of knowledge is shown to be of this kind, having no boundary and no end.

We must now explain why it was called the well of the oath. Those matters which are doubted about are decided by an oath, and those which are uncertain are confirmed in the same manner, and so, too, those which want certification receive it; from which facts this inference is drawn, that

there is no subject respecting which any one can make an affirmation with greater certainty than he can respecting the fact that the race of wisdom is without limitation and without end. It is well, therefore, to enrol one's self under the banners of one who discusses these matters without an oath; but he who is not very much inclined to assent to the assertions of another will at least assent to them when he has made oath to their correctness. But let no one refuse to take an oath of this kind, well knowing that he will have his name inscribed on pillars among those who are faithful to their oaths.

III. However, enough of this. The next thing must be to consider why it is that as four wells had been dug by the servants of Abraham and Isaac, the fourth and last was called the well of the oath. May it not be that the sacred historian here desires to represent, in a figurative manner, that as in the universe there are four elements of which this world is composed, and as there are an equal number in ourselves, of which we have been fashioned before we were moulded into our human shape, three of them are capable of being comprehended somehow or other, but the fourth is unintelligible to all who come forward as judges of it. Accordingly, we find that the four elements in the world are the earth, and the water, and the air, and the heaven, of which, even if some are difficult to find, they are still not classed in the utterly undiscoverable portion.

For that the earth, because it is a heavy, and indissoluble, and solid substance, is divided into mountains and champaign districts, and intersected by rivers and seas, so that some portion of it consists of islands, and some portions are continent. And again, some of it has a shallow and some a deep soil; and some is rough, and rugged, and strong, and altogether barren; and some is smooth and delicate, and exceedingly fertile; and besides all these facts we know a great number of others relative to the earth.

And again, there is the water, which we know has many of the aforesaid qualities in common with the earth, and many also peculiar to itself; for some of it is sweet, and some brackish, and some is mixed up of various characteristics; and some is good to drink, and some is not drinkable; and, moreover, neither of these last qualities is invariable with respect to every creature, but there are some to which it is

the one and not the other, and *vice versâ*. Again, some water is by nature cold, and other water naturally hot; for there is in all sorts of places an infinite number of springs pouring forth hot water, not on the land only but even in the sea: at all events, there have appeared before now veins pouring up warm water in the middle of the sea, which all the enormous efflux of salt water in all the sea that encircles the world, pouring over them from all eternity, has never been able to extinguish, nor even in the least degree to diminish.

Again, we know that the air has an attractive nature, yielding to such bodies as surround it in an altitude of resistance, being the organ of life, and breath, and sight, and hearing, and all the rest of the external senses, admitting of rarification, and condensation, and motion, and tranquillity, and changes, and variations of every kind, by which it is altered and modified, and generating summers and winters, and the seasons of autumn and spring, by means of which the circle of the year is at last brought to a conclusion.

IV. All these things, then, we feel: but the heaven has a nature which is incomprehensible, and it has never conveyed to us any distinct indication by which we can understand its nature; for what can we say? that it is solid ice, as some persons have chosen to assert? or that it is the purest fire? or that it is a fifth body, moving in a circle having no participation in any of the four elements? For what can we say? Has that most remote sphere of the fixed stars any density in an upward direction? or is it merely a superficies devoid of all depth, something like a plane figure? And what are the stars? Are they masses of earth full of fire? For some persons have said that they are hills, and valleys, and thickets, men who are worthy of a prison and a treadmill, or of any place where there are instruments proper for the punishment of impious persons; or are they, as some one has defined them, a continuous and dense harmony, the closely packed, indissoluble mass of æther?

Again, are they animated and intelligent? or are they destitute alike of mind and vitality? Have they their motions in consequence of any choice of their own? or merely because they are compulsory?

What, again, are we to say of the moon? Does she show

us a light of her own, or a borrowed and illegitimate one, only reflected from the rays of the sun? or is neither of these things true, but has she something mixed, as it were, so as to be a sort of combination of her own light and of that which belongs to some other body? For all these things, and others like them, belonging to the fourth and most excellent of the bodies in the world, namely, the heaven, are uncertain and incomprehensible, and are spoken of in accordance with conjectures and guesses, and not with the solid, certain reasoning of truth, so that a person might venture to swear that no mortal man will ever be able to comprehend any one of these matters clearly. At all events, the fourth and dry well was called the well of the oath on this account, because the search after the fourth element in the world, that is to say the heaven, is without any result, and is in every respect fruitless.

V. But let us now see in what manner that fourth element in us is by nature in such an especial and singular manner incomprehensible.

There are, then, four principal elements in us, the body, the external sense, the speech, and the mind. Now of these, three are not uncertain or unintelligible in every respect, but they contain some indication in themselves by which they are comprehended. Now what is my meaning in this statement? We know already that the body is divisible into three parts, and that it is capable of motion in six directions, inasmuch as it has three dimensions, in length, in depth, in breadth; and twice as many motions, namely six, the upward motion, the downward motion, that to the right, that to the left, the forward, and the backward motion. But, moreover, we are not ignorant that it is the vessel of the soul; and we are also aware that it is subject to the changes of being young, of decaying, of growing old, of dying, of undergoing dissolution. And with respect to the outward senses, we are not, so far as that is concerned, utterly dull and mutilated, but we are able to say that that also is divided into five divisions, and that there are appropriate organs for the development of each sense formed by nature; for instance, the eyes for seeing, the ears for hearing, the nostrils for smelling, and the other organs for the exercise of the respective senses to which they are adapted, and also that we may call these outward senses messengers of the mind which inform it of colours, and

shapes, and sounds, and the peculiar differences of vapours, and flavours, and, in short, which describe to it all bodies, and all the distinctive qualities which exist in them.

They also may be looked upon as body-guards of the soul, informing it of all that they see or hear; and if anything injurious attacks it from without, they foresee it, and guard against it, so that it may not enter by chance and unawares, and so become the cause of irremediable disaster to their mistress.

Again, the voice does not entirely escape our comprehension; but we know that one voice is shrill and another deep; that one is tuneful and harmonious, and another dissonant and very unmusical; and again, one voice is more powerful, and another less so. And they differ also in ten thousand other particulars, in kind, in complexion, in distance, in combined and separate tension of the tones, in the symphonies of fourths, of fifths, and of the diapason. Moreover, there are some things which we know also with respect to that articulate voice which has been allotted to man alone of all animals, as, for instance, we know that it is emitted by the mind, that it receives its articulate distinctness in the mouth, that it is by the striking of the tongue that articulate utterance is impressed upon the tones of the voice, and which renders the uttered sound not only a bare, naked, useless noise, void of all characteristic, and that it discharges the office of a herald or interpreter towards the mind which suggests it.

VI. Now then is the fourth element which exists within us, the dominant mind, comprehensible to us in the same manner as these other divisions? Certainly not; for what do we think it to be in its essence? Do we look upon it as spirit, or as blood, or, in short, as any bodily substance! But it is not a substance, but must be pronounced incorporeal. Is it then a limit, or a species, or a number, or a continued act, or a harmony, or any existing thing whatever? Is it, the very first moment that we are born, infused into us from without, or is it some warm nature in us which is cooled by the air which is diffused around us, like a piece of iron which has been heated at a forge, and then being plunged into cold water, is by that process tempered and hardened? (And perhaps it is from the cooling process (ψύξις) to which it is thus submitted *that the soul* (ἡ ψυχή) derives its name.) What more shall

we say? When we die, is it extinguished and destroyed together with our bodies? or does it continue to live a long time? or, thirdly, is it wholly incorruptible and immortal?

Again, where, in what part does this mind lie hid? Has it received any settled habitation? For some men have dedicated to it our head, as the principal citadel, around which all the outward senses have their lairs; thinking it natural that its body-guards should be stationed near it, as near the palace of a mighty king. Some again contend earnestly in favour of the position which they assign it, believing that it is enshrined like a statue in the heart.

Therefore now the fourth element is incomprehensible, in the world the heaven, in comparison of the nature of the earth, of the water, and of the air; and the mind in man, in comparison of the body and the outward sense, and the speech, which is the interpreter of the mind; may it not be the case also, that for this reason the fourth year is described as holy and praiseworthy in the sacred scriptures? For among created things, the heaven is holy in the world, in accordance with which body, the imperishable and indestructible natures revolve; and in man the mind is holy, being a sort of fragment of the Deity, and especially according to the statement of Moses, who says, "God breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul."*

And it appears to me, that it is not without reason that both these things are called praiseworthy; for these two things, the heaven and the mind, are the things which are able to utter, with all becoming dignity, the praises, and hymns, and glory, and beatitude of the Father who created them: for man has received an especial honour beyond all other animals, namely, that of ministering to the living God. And the heaven is always singing melodies, perfecting an all-musical harmony, in accordance with the motions of all the bodies which exist therein; of which, if the sound ever reached our ears, love, which could not be restrained, and frantic desires, and furious impetuosity, which could not be put an end to or pacified, would be engendered, and would compel us to give up even what is necessary, nourishing ourselves no longer like ordinary mortals on the meat and drink, which is received by means of our throat, but on the inspired songs of music

* Genesis ii. 7.

in its highest perfection, as persons about to be made immortal through the medium of their ears: and it is said that Moses* was an incorporeal hearer of these melodies, when he went for forty days, and an equal number of nights, without at all touching any bread or any water.

VII. Therefore the heaven, which is the archetypal organ of music, appears to have been arranged in a most perfect manner, for no other object except that the hymns sung to the honour of the Father of the universe, might be attuned in a musical manner; and we hear that virtue, that is to say, Leah,† after the birth of her fourth son, was no longer able to bring forth any more, but restrained, or perhaps I should say, was restrained, as to her generative powers; for she found, I conceive, all her generative power dry and barren, after she had brought forth Judah, that is to say, "confession," the perfect fruit: and the phrase, "Leah desisted from bearing children," differs in no respect from the statement, that the children of Isaac found no water in the fourth well."‡ Since it appears from both these figurative expressions, that every creature thirsts for God, by whom all their births take place, and from whom nourishment is bestowed to them when they are born.

Perhaps therefore some petty cavilling critics will imagine that all this statement about the digging of the wells is a superfluous piece of prolixity on the part of the lawgiver: but those who deserve a larger classification, being citizens not of some petty state but of the wide world, being men of more perfect wisdom, will know well that the real question is not about the four wells, but about the parts of the universe that the men who are gifted with sight, and are fond of contemplation exercise their powers of investigation; namely, about the earth, the water, the air, and the heaven. And examining each of these matters with the most accurately refined conception, in three of them they have found some things within the reach of their comprehension; on which account they have given these names, injustice, enmity, and latitude to what they have discovered. But in the fourth, that is to say in heaven, they have found absolutely nothing whatever, which they could comprehend; as we explained a little time ago:

* *Exodus xxiv. 18.* † Genesis xxix. 35. ‡ Genesis xxvi. 32.

for the fourth is found to be a well destitute of water, and dry; and for the reason above mentioned it is called a well.

VIII. We will now investigate what comes next, and inquire what Charran is, and why the man who went up from the well came to it. Charran then, as it appears to me, is a sort of metropolis of the outward senses: and it is interpreted at one time a pit dug, at another time holes; one fact being intimated by both these names; for our bodies are in a manner dug out to furnish the organs of the outward senses, and each of the organs is a sort of hole for the corresponding outward sense in which it shelters itself as in a cave: when therefore any one goes up from the well which is called the well of the oath, as if he were leaving a harbour, he immediately does of necessity come to Charran: for it is a matter of necessity that the outward senses should receive one who comes on an emigration from that most excellent country of knowledge, unbounded as it is in extent, without any guide.

For our soul is very often set in motion by its own self after it has put off the whole burden of the body, and has escaped from the multitude of the outward senses; and very often too, even while it is still clothed in them.

Therefore by its own simple motion it has arrived at the comprehension of those things which are appreciable only by the intellect; and by the motion of the body, it has attained to an understanding of those things which are perceptible by the outward senses; therefore, if any one is unable altogether to associate with the mind alone, he then finds for himself a second refuge, namely, the external senses; and whoever fails in attaining to a comprehension of the things which are intelligible only by the intellect is immediately drawn over to the objects of the outward senses; for the second organ is always to the outward senses, in the case of those things which are not able to make a successful one as far as the dominant mind. But it is well for man not to grow old or to spend all his time in this course either, but rather, as if they were straying in a foreign country like sojourners, to be always seeking for second migration, and for a return to their native land.

Therefore Laban, knowing absolutely nothing of either species or genus, or form, or conception, or of anything else whatever which is comprehended by the intellect alone, and depending solely on what lies externally visible, and such

things as come under the notice of the eyes, and the ears, and the other hundred faculties, is thought worthy of Charran for his country, which Jacob, the lover of virtue, inhabits as a foreign land for a short time, always bearing in his recollection his return homewards; therefore his mother, perseverance, that is Rebecca, says to him, "Rise up and flee to Laban, my brother, to Charran, and dwell with him certain days."* Do you not perceive then that the practiser of virtue will not endure to live permanently in the country of the outward senses, but only to remain there a few days and a short time, on account of the necessities of the body to which he is bound? But a longer time and an entire life is allotted to him in the city which is appreciable only by the intellect.

IX. In reference to which fact, also, it appears to me to be that his grandfather also, by name Abraham, so called from his knowledge, would not endure to remain any great length of time in Charran, for it is said in the scriptures that "Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed from Charran;"† although his father Terah, which name being interpreted means, the investigation of a smell, lived there till the day of his death.‡ Therefore it is expressly stated in the sacred scriptures that "Terah died in Charran," for he was only a reconnoitrer of virtue, not a citizen. And he availed himself of smells, and not of the enjoyments of food, as he was not able as yet to fill himself with wisdom, nor indeed even to get a taste of it, but only to smell it; for as it is said that those dogs which are calculated for hunting can by exerting their faculty of smell, find out the lurking places of their game at a great distance, being by nature rendered wonderfully acute as to the outward sense of smell; so in the same manner the lover of instruction tracks out the sweet breeze which is given forth by justice, and by any other virtue, and is eager to watch those qualities from which this most admirable source of delight proceeds, and while he is unable to do so he moves his head all round in a circle, smelling out nothing else, but seeking only for that most sacred scent of excellence and food, for he does not deny that he is eager for knowledge and wisdom.

Blessed therefore are they to whom it has happened to enjoy the delights of wisdom, and to feast upon its speculations and

* *Genesis xxvii. 43.* † Genesis xii. 4. ‡ Genesis xvii. 32.

doctrines, and even of the being cheered by them still to thirst for more, feeling an insatiable and inceasing desire for knowledge. And those will obtain the second place who are not allured indeed to enjoy the sacred table, but who nevertheless refresh their souls with its odours; for they will be excited by the fragrances of virtue like those languid invalids who, because they are not as yet able to take solid food, nevertheless feed on the smell of such viands as the sons of the physicians prepare as a sort of remedy for their impotency.

X. Therefore, having left the land of the Chaldæans, Terah is said to have migrated to Charran; bringing with him his son Abraham and the rest of his household who agreed with him in opinion, not in order that we might read in the account of the historical chronicles that some men had become emigrants, leaving their native country and becoming inhabitants of a foreign land as if it were their own country, but in order that a lesson of the greatest importance to life and full of wisdom, and adapted to man alone. might not be neglected.

And what is the lesson? The Chaldæans are great astronomers, and the inhabitants of Charran occupy themselves with the topics relating to the external senses. Therefore the sacred account says to the investigator of the things of nature, why are you inquiring about the sun, and asking whether he is a foot broad, whether he is greater than the whole earth put together, or whether he is even many times as large? And why are you investigating the causes of the light of the moon, and whether it has a borrowed light, or one which proceeds solely from itself? Why, again, do you seek to understand the nature of the rest of the stars, of their motion, of their sympathy with one another, and even with earthly things? And why, while walking upon the earth do you soar above the clouds? And why, while rooted in the solid land, do you affirm that you can reach the things in the sky? And why do you endeavour to form conjectures about matters which cannot be ascertained by conjecture? And why do you busy yourself about sublime subjects which you ought not to meddle with? And why do you extend your desire to make discoveries in mathematical science as far as the heaven? And why do you devote yourself to astronomy, and talk about nothing but high subjects? My good man, do not trouble your head about

things beyond the ocean, but attend only to what is near you; and be content rather to examine yourself without flattery.

How, then, will you find out what you want, even if you are successful? Go with full exercise of your intellect to Charran, that is, to the trench which is dug, into the holes and caverns of the body, and investigate the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, and the other organs of the external senses; and if you wish to be a philosopher, study philosophically that branch which is the most indispensable and at the same time the most becoming to a man, and inquire what the faculty of sight is, what hearing is, what taste, what smell, what touch is, in a word, what is external sense; then seek to understand what it is to see, and how you see; what it is to hear, and how you hear; what it is to smell, or to taste, or to touch, and how each of these operations is ordinarily effected. But is it not the very extravagance of insane folly to seek to comprehend the dwelling of the universe, before your own private dwelling is accurately known to you? But I do not as yet lay the more important and extensive injunction upon you to make yourself acquainted with your own soul and mind, of the knowledge of which you are so proud; for in reality you will never be able to comprehend it.

Mount up then to heaven, and talk arrogantly about the things which exist there, before you are as yet able to comprehend, according to the words of the poet,

> "All the good and all the evil
> Which thy own abode contains;"

and, bringing down that messenger of yours from heaven, and dragging him down from his search into matters existing there, become acquainted with yourself, and carefully and diligently labour to arrive at such happiness as is permitted to man. Now this disposition the Hebrews called Terah, and the Greeks Socrates; for they say also that the latter grew old in the most accurate study by which he could hope to know himself, never once directing his philosophical speculations to the subjects beyond himself. But he was really a man; but Terah is the principle itself which is proposed to every one, according to which each man should know himself, like a tree full of good branches, in order that these persons who are fond of virtue might without difficulty gather the fruit of pure morality,

and thus become filled with the most delightful and saving food.

Such, then, are those men who reconnoitre the quarters of wisdom for us; but those who are actually her athletes, and who practise her exercises, are more perfect. For these men think fit to learn with complete accuracy the whole question connected with the external senses, and after having done so, then to proceed to another and more important speculation, leaving all consideration of the holes of the body which they call Charran. Of the number of these men is Abraham, who attained to great progress and improvement in the comprehension of complete knowledge; for when he knew most, then he most completely renounced himself in order to attain to the accurate knowledge of him who was the truly living God. And, indeed, this is a very natural course of events; for he who completely understands himself does also very much, because of his thorough appreciation of it, renounce the universal nothingness of the creature; and he who renounces himself learns to comprehend the living God.

XI. We have now, then, explained what Charran is, and why he who left the well of the oath came thither. We must now consider the third point which comes next in order, namely, what the place is to which this man came; for it is said, "He met him in the place."* Now place is considered in three ways: firstly, as a situation filled by a body; secondly, as the divine word which God himself has filled wholly and entirely with incorporeal powers; for says the scripture, "I have seen the place in which the God of Israel stood,"† in which alone he permitted his prophet to perform sacrifice to him, forbidding him to do so in other places. For he is ordered to go up into the place which the Lord God shall choose, and there to sacrifice burnt offerings and sacrifices for salvation, and to bring other victims also without spot.

According to the third signification, God himself is called a place, from the fact of his surrounding the universe, and being surrounded himself by nothing whatever, and from the fact of his being the refuge of all persons, and since he himself is his own district, containing himself and resembling himself alone. I, indeed, am not a place, but I am in a place, and every existing being is so in a similar manner. So that which

* Genesis xxviii. 11. † Exodus xxiv. 10.

is surrounded differs from that which surrounds it; but the Deity, being surrounded by nothing, is necessarily itself its own place. And there is an evidence in support of my view of the matter in the following sacred oracle delivered with respect to Abraham: "He came unto the place of which the Lord God had told him: and having looked up with his eyes, he saw the place afar off."*

Tell me, now, did he who had come to the place see it afar off? Or perhaps it is but an identical expression for two different things, one of which is the divine world, and the other, God, who existed before the world. But he who was conducted by wisdom comes to the former place, having found that the main part and end of propitiation is the divine word, in which he who is fixed does not as yet attain to such a height as to penetrate to the essence of God, but sees him afar off; or, rather, I should say, he is not able even to behold him afar off, but he only discerns this fact, that God is at a distance from every creature, and that any comprehension of him is removed to a great distance from all human intellect. Perhaps, however, the historian, by this allegorical form of expression, does not here mean by his expression, "place," the Cause of all things; but the idea which he intends to convey may be something of this sort;—he came to the place, and looking up with his eyes he saw the very place to which he had come, which was a very long way from the God who may not be named nor spoken of, and who is in every way incomprehensible.

XII. These things, then, being defined as a necessary preliminary, when the practiser of virtue comes to Charran, the outward sense, he does not "meet" the place, nor that place either which is filled by a mortal body; for all those who are born of the dust, and who occupy any place whatever, and who do of necessity fill some position, partake of that; nor the third and most excellent kind of place, of which it was scarcely possible for that man to form an idea who made his abode at the well which was entitled the "well of the oath," where the self-taught race, Isaac, abides, who never abandons his faith in God and his invisible comprehension of him, but who keeps to the intermediate divine word, which affords him the

* Genesis xxii. 4.

best suggestions, and teaches him everything which is suitable to the times.

For God, not condescending to come down to the external senses, sends his own words or angels for the sake of giving assistance to those who love virtue. But they attend like physicians to the diseases of the soul, and apply themselves to heal them, offering sacred recommendations like sacred laws, and inviting men to practise the duties inculcated by them, and, like the trainers of wrestlers, implanting in their pupils strength, and power, and irresistible vigour. Very properly, therefore, when he has arrived at the external sense, he is represented no longer as meeting God, but only the divine word, just as his grandfather Abraham, the model of wisdom, did; for the scripture tells us, "The Lord departed when he had finished conversing with Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place."*

From which expression it is inferred, that he also met with the sacred words from which God, the father of the universe, had previously departed, no longer displaying visions from himself but only those which proceed from his subordinate powers. And it is with exceeding beauty and propriety that it is said, not that he came to the place, but that he met the place: for to come is voluntary, but to meet is very often involuntary; so that the divine Word appearing on a sudden, supplies an unexpected joy, greater than could have been hoped, inasmuch as it is about to travel in company with the solitary soul; for Moses also "brings forward the people to a meeting with God,"† well knowing that he comes invisibly towards those souls who have a longing to meet with him.

XIII. And he subsequently alleges a reason why he "met the place;" for, says he, "the sun was set."‡ Not meaning the sun which appears to us, but the most brilliant and radiant light of the invisible and Almighty God. When this light shines upon the mind, the inferior beams of words (that is of angels) set. And much more are all the places perceptible by the external senses overshadowed; but when he departs in a different direction, then they all rise and shine. And do not wonder if, according to the rules of allegorical description, the sun is likened to the Father and Governor of the universe; for in reality nothing is like unto God; but those things

* Genesis xviii. 33. † Exodus xix. 17. ‡ Genesis xxviii. 11.

which by the vain opinion of men are thought to be so, are only two things, one invisible and the other visible; the soul being the invisible thing, and the sun the visible one.

Now he has shown the similitude of the soul in another passage, where he says, "God made man, in the image of God created he him." And again, in the law enacted against homicides, he says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed in requital for that blood, because in the image of God did I make him."* But the likeness of the sun he only indicates by symbols. And it is easy otherwise by means of argument to perceive this, since God is the first light, "For the Lord is my light and my Saviour,"† is the language of the Psalms; and not only the light, but he is also the archetypal pattern of every other light, or rather he is more ancient and more sublime than even the archetypal model, though he is spoken of as the model; for the real model was his own most perfect word, the light, and he himself is like to no created thing. Since, as the sun divides day and night, so also does Moses say that God divided the light from the darkness; for "God made a division between the light and between the darkness."‡

And besides all this, as the sun, when he arises, discovers hidden things, so also does God, who created all things, not only bring them all to light, but he has even created what before had no existence, not being only their maker, but also their founder.

XIV. And the sun is also spoken of in many passages of holy writ in a figurative manner. Once as the human mind, which men build up as a city§ and furnish, who are compelled to serve the creature in preference to the uncreated God, of whom it is said that, "They built strong cities for Pharaoh and Peitho,"§ that is, for discourse; to which persuasion (τὸ πείθειν) is attributed, and Rameses, or the outward sense, by which the soul is devoured as if by moths; for the name Rameses, being interpreted, means, "the shaking of a moth;" and On, the mind, which they called Heliopolis, since the mind, like the sun, has the predominance over the whole mass of our body, and extends its powers like the beams of the sun, over everything.

* Genesis ix. 6. † Psalm xxvi. 1. ‡ Genesis i. 4.
§ Genesis xi. 4. ‖ Exodus i. 11.

But he who appropriates to himself the regulation of corporeal things, by name Joseph, takes the priest and minister of the mind to be his father-in law; for says the scripture, "he gave him Aseneth, the daughter of Peutephres, the priest of Heliopolis, for his wife."* And, using symbolical language, he calls the outward sense a second sun, inasmuch as it shows all the objects of which it is able to form a judgment to the intellect, concerning which he speaks thus, "The sun rose upon him when he passed by the appearance of God."† For in real truth, when we are no longer able to endure to pass all our time with the most sacred appearances, and as it were with incorporeal images, but when we turn aside in another direction, and forsake them, we use another light, that, namely, in accordance with the external sense, which in real truth, is in no respect different from darkness, which, after it has arisen, arouses as if from sleep the senses of seeing, and of hearing, and also of taste, and of touch, and of smell, and sends to sleep the intellectual qualities of prudence, and justice, and knowledge, and wisdom, which were all awake.

And it is for this reason that the sacred scripture says, that no one can be pure before the evening,‡ as the disorderly motions of the outward senses agitate and confuse the intellect. Moreover, he establishes a law for the priests also which may not be avoided, combining with it an expression of a grave opinion when it says, "He shall not eat of the holy things unless he have washed his body in water, and unless the sun has set, and he has become pure."§ For by these words it is very clearly shown that there is no one whatever completely pure, so as to be fit to be initiated into the holy and sacred mysteries, to whose lot it has fallen to be honoured with these glories of life which are appreciable by the external senses. But if any one rejects these glories, he is deservedly made conspicuous by the light of wisdom, by means of which he will be able to wash off the stains of vain opinion and to become pure.

Do you not see that even the sun itself produces opposite effects when he is setting from those which he causes when rising? For when he rises everything upon the earth shines, and the things in heaven are hidden from our view; but, on

* Genesis xli. 45.
† Genesis xxxii. 31.
‡ Leviticus iv. 31.
§ Leviticus xxii. 6.

the other hand, when he sets then the stars appear and the things on earth are overshadowed. In the same manner, also, in us, when the light of the outward senses rises like the sun, the celestial and heavenly sciences are really and truly hidden from view; but when this light is near setting, then the starlike radiance of the virtues appears, when the mind is pure, and concealed by no object of the outward senses.

XV. But according to the third signification, when he speaks of the sun, he means the divine word, the model of that sun which moves about through the heaven, as has been said before, and with respect to which it is said, "The sun went forth upon the earth, and Lot entered into Segor, and the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire." * For the word of God, when it reaches to our earthly constitution, assists and protects those who are akin to virtue, or whose inclinations lead them to virtue; so that it provides them with a complete refuge and salvation, but upon their enemies it sends irremediable overthrow and destruction.

And in the fourth signification, what is meant by the sun is the God and ruler of the universe himself, as I have said already, by means of whom such offences as are irremediable, and which appear to be overshadowed and concealed, are revealed; for as all things are possible, so, likewise, all things are known to God.

In reference to which faculty of his it is that he drags those persons who are living dissolutely as regards their souls, and who are in a debauched and intemperate manner, cohabiting with the daughters of the mind the outward senses, as prostitutes and harlots, to the light of the sun, in order to display their true characters; for the scripture says, "And the people abode in Shittim;" now the meaning of the name Shittim is, "the thorns of the passions" which sting and wound the soul. "And the people was polluted, and began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab," † and these who are called daughters are the outward senses, for the name Moab is interpreted, "of a father;" and the scripture adds, "Take all the chiefs of the people, and make an example of them unto the Lord in the face of the sun, and the anger of the Lord shall be turned from Israel." ‡ For he not only desires that the

* *Genesis* xix. 23. † Numbers xxv. 1. ‡ Numbers xxv. 4.

wicked deeds which are hidden shall be made manifest, and therefore turns upon them the beams of the sun, but he also by this symbolical language calls the father of the universe the sun, that being by whom all things are seen beforehand, and even all those things which are invisibly concealed in the recesses of the mind; and when they are made manifest, then he promises that he who is the only merciful being, will become merciful to the people. Why so? Because, even if the mind, fancying that though it does wrong it can escape the notice of the Deity as not being able to see everything, should sin secretly and in dark places, and should after that, either by reason of its own notions or through the suggestions of some one else, conceive that it is impossible that anything should be otherwise than clear to God, and should disclose itself and all its actions, and should bring them forward, as it were, out of the light of the sun, and display them to the governor of the universe, saying, that it repents of the perverse conduct which it formerly exhibited when under the influence of foolish opinion (for that nothing is indistinct before God, but all things are known and clear to him, not merely such as have been done, but even such are merely hoped or designed, by reason of the boundless character of his wisdom), it then is purified and benefited, and it propitiates the chastiser who was ready to punish it, namely, conscience, who was previously filled with just anger towards it, and who now admits repentance as the younger brother of perfect innocence and freedom from sin.

XVI. Moreover, it appears that Moses has in other passages also taken the sun as a symbol of the great Cause of all things, of which I see an instance in the law which is enacted with respect to those who borrow on pledges: let us recite the law, "If thou takest as a pledge the garment of thy neighbour, thou shalt give it back before the setting of the sun: for it is his covering, it is the only covering of his nakedness, in which he lies down. If he cries unto me I will hearken unto him, for I am merciful."* Is it not natural that those who fancy that the lawgiver displays such earnestness about a garment should, if they do not reproach him, at least make a suggestion, saying, "What are ye saying, my good men? Do ye affirm that the Creator and ruler of the world calls himself merciful

* Exodus xxii. 26.

with respect to so trivial a matter, as that of a garment not being restored to the borrower by the lender?" These are the opinions and notions of men who have never had the least conception or comprehension of the virtue of the almighty God, and who, contrary to all human and divine law, impart the triviality of human affairs to the uncreate and immortal nature, which is full of happiness, and blessedness, and perfection; for in what respect do those lenders act unreasonably, who retain in their own hands the pledges which are deposited with them as security, until they receive back their own which they have lent? The debtors are poor, some one will perhaps say, and it is right to pity them: would it not then have been reasonable and better to enact a law in accordance with which a contribution should be made to assist their necessities, rather than allow them to appear as debtors, or else one which should forbid the lending on pledges at all?

But the law which has permitted the lending on pledges, cannot fairly be indignant against those who will not give up the pledges which they have received before the proper time, as if they were acting unjustly.

But if any one having come, so to say, to the very farthest limits of poverty, and, being clothed in rags, loads himself with new debts, neglecting the pity which he receives from the bystanders, which is freely bestowed, upon those who fall into such misfortunes, in their own houses, and in the temples, and in the market-place, and everywhere; such an one brings and offers to his creditor, the only covering which he had for his shame, with which he has been wont to cover the secret parts of his nature, as a pledge for something. For what, I pray? Is it for some other and better garment? For no one is unprovided with necessary food as long as the springs of the rivers bubble up, and the torrents flow abundantly, and the earth gives forth its annual fruits.

Again, is any creditor so covetous of riches, or so very cruel, or so perverse, as not to be willing to contribute a tetradrachm, or even less, to one in distress? Or is anyone so stingy as to be willing to lend it, but to refuse to give it? or as to take the only garment that the poor man has as a pledge? which indeed under another name may fairly be called running away with a man's clothes;* for men who do this are accustomed to

* *The Greek word is* λωποδυτέω. A λωποδύτης was one who

put on other peoples' clothes, and steal them, and to leave the proper owners naked.

And why has the law provided so carefully that the debtor may not be without his clothes by night, and that he may not lie down to sleep without them, but has not paid the same attention to the fact of his being indecorously naked by day? Are not all things concealed by night and darkness, so as to cause less shame, or rather none at all at that time, but are they not disclosed by day and by light, so as then to compel persons to blush more freely? And why does the law not use the expression "to give," but "to restore?" For restoration takes place with respect to the property of other persons, but pledges belong rather to those who have lent on them than to those who have borrowed on them. Moreover, do you not perceive that the law has not enjoined the debtor, who has received back his garment that it may serve as bed-clothes, to bring it back again to his creditor at the return of daylight? And, indeed, if the exact propriety of the language be considered, even the most stupid person may see that there is something additional meant beyond what is formally expressed. For the injunction rather resembles a maxim than a recommendation. For, if a person had been giving a recommendation, he would have said: "Give back to your debtor, at the approach of evening, the garment which has been pledged to you, if it be the only garment that he is possessed of, that he may have something with which to cover himself at night." But one who was laying down a maxim would speak thus; as indeed the law does here, "For it is his garment, the only covering of his nakedness, in which he will lie down to sleep."

XVII. These things then, and other things of the same kind, may be urged in reply to those assertors of the literal sense of a passage; and who superciliously reject all other explanations. We will now, in accordance with the usual laws of allegorical speaking, say what is becoming with respect to these subjects.

We say, therefore, that a garment is here spoken of symbolically, to signify speech; for clothes keep off the injuries which are wont to visit the body, from cold and heat, and they

frequented the baths for the purpose of stealing the clothes of the bathers.

also conceal the unmentionable parts of nature, and moreover, a cloak is a fitting garment for the body. In much the same manner, speech has been given to man by God, as the most excellent of gifts; for in the first place, it is a defensive weapon against those who would attack him with innovations. For as nature has fortified all other animals with their own appropriate and peculiar means of defence, by which they are able to repel those who attempt to injure them, so also has it bestowed upon man that greatest defence and most impregnable protection of speech, with which, as with a panoply, every one who is completely clothed, will have a domestic and most appropriate bodyguard; and employing it as a champion, will be able to ward off all the injuries which can be brought against him by his enemies.

In the second place, it is a most necessary defence against shame and reproach; for speech is very well calculated to conceal and obscure the faults of men.

In the third place, it conduces to the whole ornament of life: for this is the thing which improves every one, and which conducts every one to what is best; for there are many disgraceful and mischievous men, who take conversation as a pledge, and deprive its proper owners of it, and utterly cut off what they ought to seek to increase; like men who ravage the lands of their enemies, and who attempt to destroy their corn and all the rest of their crops, which, if it were left unhurt, would be a great advantage to those who would use it.

For some men carry on an irreconcilable and never-ending war against rational nature, and utterly extirpate its every shoot and beginning, and destroy all its first appearances of propagation, and render it, as one may say, utterly unproductive and barren of all good practices. For sometimes, when it is borne onwards towards sacred instruction with irresistible impetuosity, and when it is smitten with a love of the speculations of true philosophy, they—out of jealousy and envy, fearing lest, when it has derived strength from its noble aspirations and has been elevated to a splendid height, it may overwhelm all their petty cavils and plausible devices against the truth, like an irresistible torrent—turn its energy in another direction by their own evil artifices, guiding it in another channel to vulgar and illiberal acts: and very often they seek to blunt it or to *hedge it in,* and in this way leave the nobility of its nature

uncultivated, just as at times wicked guardians of orphan children have rendered a deep-soiled and fertile land barren.

And these most pitiless of all men have not been restrained by shame from stripping the man of his only garment, namely, speech; "For," says the scripture, "it is his only covering."—What is a man's only covering, except speech? For, as neighing is the peculiar attribute of a horse, and barking of a dog, and lowing of an ox, and roaring of a lion, so also is speaking, and speech itself, the peculiar property of man: for this is what man has received above all other animals as his peculiar gift, as a protection, and bulwark, and panoply, and wall of defence; he being, of all living creatures, the most beloved by God.

XVIII. On which account the scripture adds, "This is the only covering of his nakedness;" for what can so becomingly overshadow and conceal the reproaches and disgraces of life, as speech? For ignorance is a disgrace akin to irrational nature, but education is the brother of speech, and an ornament properly belonging to man. In what then will a man lie down to rest? That is to say, in what will a man find tranquillity and a respite from his labours, except in speech? For speech is a relief to our most miserable and afflicted race? As therefore, when men have been overwhelmed by grief, or by fear, or by any other evil, tranquillity, and constancy, and the kindness of friends have often restored them; so it happens, not often, but invariably, that speech, the only real averter of evil, wards off that most heavy burden which the necessities of that body in the which we are bound up, and the unforeseen accidents of external circumstances which attack us, impose upon us; for speech is a friend, and an acquaintance, and a kinsman, and a companion bound up within us; I should rather say, fitted close and united to us by some indissoluble and invisible cement of nature.

On this account it is, that it forewarns us of what will be expedient for us, and when any unexpected event befalls us it comes forward of its own accord to assist us; not only bringing advantage of one kind only, such as that which he who is an adviser without acting, or an agent who can give no advice, may supply, but of both kinds: for he does not display a half-complete power, but one which is perfect in every part. Inasmuch, as even if it were to fail in his endeavour, and

in any conceptions which may have been formed, or efforts which may have been made, it still can have recourse to the third species of assistance, namely, consolation.

For speech is, as it were, a medicine for the wounds of the soul, and a saving remedy for its passions, which, "even before the setting of the sun," the lawgiver says one must restore: that is to say, before the all-brilliant beams of the almighty and all-glorious God are obscured, which he, out of pity for our race, sends down from heaven upon the human mind. For while that most God-like light abides in the soul, we shall be able to give back the speech, which was deposited as a pledge, as if it were a garment, in order that he who has received this peculiar possession of man, may by its means conceal the discreditable circumstances of life, and reap the benefit of the divine gift, and indulge in a respite combined with tranquillity, in consequence of the presence of so useful an adviser and defender, who will never leave the ranks in which he has been stationed.

Moreover, while God pours upon you the light of his beams, do you hasten in the light of day to restore his pledge to the Lord; for when the sun has set, then you, like the whole land of Egypt,* will have an everlasting darkness which may be felt, and being stricken with blindness and ignorance, you will be deprived of all those things of which you thought that you had certain possession, by that sharp-sighted Israel, whose pledges you hold, having made one who was by nature exempt from slavery a slave to necessity.

XIX. We have discussed this subject at this length with no other object except that of teaching that the mind, which is inclined to practise virtue, having irregular motions towards prolificness and sterility, and as one may say, being in a manner always ascending and descending, when it becomes prolific and is elevated to a height is illuminated with the archetypal and incorporeal beams of the rational spring of the all-perfecting sun; but when it descends and becomes unproductive, then it is again illuminated by those images of those beams, the immortal words which it is customary to call angels. On which account we now read in the scripture, "He met the place; for the sun was set."†

For when those beams of God desert the soul by means of

* *Exodus x. 21.* † Genesis xxviii. 2.

which the clearest comprehensions of affairs are engendered in it, then arises that second and weaker light of words, and the light of things is no longer seen, just as is the case in this lower world. For the moon, which occupies the second rank next to the sun, when that body has set, pours forth a somewhat weaker light than his upon the earth; and to meet a place or a word is a most sufficient gift for those who cannot discern that God is superior to every place or word; because they have not a soul wholly destitute of light, but because, since that most unmixed and brilliant light has set, they have been favoured with one which is alloyed.

"For the children of Israel had light in all their dwellings,"* says the sacred historian in the book of the Exodus, so that night and darkness were continually banished from them, though it is in night and darkness that those men live who have lost the eyes of the soul rather than those of the body, having no experience of the beams of virtue. But some persons—supposing that what is meant here by the figurative expression of the sun is the external sense and the mind, which are looked upon as the things which have the power of judging; and that what is meant by place is the divine word—understand the allegory in this manner: the practiser of virtue met with the divine word, after the mortal and human light had set; for as long as the mind thinks that it attains to a firm comprehension of the objects of intellect, and the outward sense conceives that it has a similar understanding of its appropriate objects, and that it dwells amid sublime objects, the divine word stands aloof at a distance; but when each of these comes to confess its own weakness, and sets in a manner while availing itself of concealment, then immediately the right reason of a soul well-practised in virtue comes in a welcome manner to their assistance, when they have begun to despair of their own strength, and await the aid which is invisibly coming to them from without.

XX. Therefore, the scripture says in the next verses, "That he took one of the stones of the place and placed it at his head, and slept in that place."† Any one may wonder not only at the interior and mystical doctrine contained in these words, but also at the distinct assertion, which gives us a lesson in

* Exodus x. 23. † Genesis xxviii. 11.

labour and endurance: for the historian does not think it becoming, that the man who is devoted to the study of virtue should adopt a luxurious life, and live softly, imitating the pursuits and rivalries of those who are called indeed happy, but who are in reality full of all unhappiness; whose entire life is a sleep and a dream, according to the holy lawgiver.

These men, after they have during the whole day been doing all sorts of injustice to others, in courts of justice, and council halls, and theatres, and everywhere, then return home, like miserable men as they are, to overturn their own house. I mean not that house which comes under the class of buildings, but that which is akin to the soul, I mean the body. Introducing immoderate and incessant food, and irrigating it with an abundance of pure wine, until the reason is overwhelmed, and disappears; and the passions which have their seat beneath the belly, the offspring of satiety, rise up, being carried away by unrestrained frenzy, and falling upon, and vehemently attacking all that they meet with, are only at last appeased after they have worked off their excessive violence of excitement.

But by night, when it is time to turn towards rest, having prepared costly couches and the most exquisite of beds, they lie down in the most exceeding softness, imitating the luxury of women, whom nature has permitted to indulge in a more relaxed system of life, inasmuch as their maker, the Creator of the universe, has made their bodies of a more delicate stamp. Now no such person as this is a pupil of the sacred word, but those only are the disciples of that who are real genuine men, lovers of temperance, and orderliness, and modesty, men who have laid down continence, and frugality, and fortitude, as a kind of base and foundation for the whole of life; and safe stations for the soul, in which it may anchor without danger and without changeableness: for being superior to money, and pleasure, and glory, they look down upon meats and drinks, and everything of that sort, beyond what is necessary to ward off hunger: being thoroughly ready to undergo hunger, and thirst, and heat, and cold, and all other things, however hard they may be to be borne, for the sake of the acquisition of virtue. And being admirers of whatever is most easily provided, so as not to be ashamed of ever such cheap or shabby clothes, thinking rather, on the other hand, that sumptuous apparel is a reproach and great scandal to life.

To these men, the soft earth is their most costly couch; their bed is bushes, and grass, and herbage, and a thick layer of leaves; and the pillows for their head are a few stones, or any little mounds which happen to rise a little above the surface of the plain.

Such a life as this, is, by luxurious men, denominated a life of hardship, but by those who live for virtue, it is called most delightful; for it is well adapted, not for those who are called men, but for those who really are such. Do you not see, that even now, also, the sacred historian represents the practiser of honourable pursuits, who abounds in all royal materials and appointments, as sleeping on the ground, and using a stone for his pillow; and a little further on, he speaks of him as asking in his prayers for bread and a cloak, the necessary wealth of nature? like one who has at all times held in contempt, the man who dwells among vain opinions, and who is inclined to revile all those who are disposed to admire him; this man is the archetypal pattern of the soul which is devoted to the practice of virtue, and an enemy of every effeminate person.

XXI. Hitherto I have been uttering the praises of the man devoted to labour and to virtue, as it occurred to me naturally; but now we must examine what is symbolically signified under the expressions made use of.

Now it is well that we should know, that the divine place and the sacred region are full of incorporeal intelligences; and these intelligences are immortal souls. Taking then one of these intelligences, and selecting one of them according as it appears to be the most excellent, this lover of virtue, of whom we are speaking, applies it to our own mind, to it as to the head of a united body; for, indeed, the mind is in a manner the head of the soul; and he does this, using the pretext indeed as if he were going to sleep, but, in reality, as being about to rest upon the word of God, and to place the whole of his life as the lightest possible burden upon it; and it listens to him gladly, and receives the labourer in the paths of virtue at first, as if he were going to become a disciple; then when he has shown his approbation of the dexterity of his nature, he gives him his hand, like a gymnastic trainer, and invites him to the gymnasia, and standing firmly, compels him to wrestle with him, until he has rendered his strength so great as to be irresistible, changing his ears by the divine influ-

ences into eyes, and calling this newly-modelled disposition Israel, that is, the man who sees.*

Then also he crowns him with the garland of victory. But this garland has a singular and foreign, and, perhaps, not altogether a well-omened name, for it is called by the president of the games torpor, for it is said, that the breadth became torpid† of all the rewards and of the proclamations of the heralds, and of all those most wonderful prizes for pre-eminent excellence which are had in honour; for the soul which has received a share of irresistible power, and which has been made perfect in the contests of virtue, and which has arrived at the very furthest limit of what is honourable, will never be unduly elated or puffed up by arrogance, nor stand upon tiptoes, and boast as if it were well to make vast strides with bare feet; but the breadth which was extended wide by opinion, will become torpid and contracted, and then will voluntarily succumb and yield to tameness, so as being classed in an inferior order to that of the incorporeal natures, it may carry off the victory while appearing to be defeated; for it is accounted a most honourable thing to yield the palm to those who are superior to one's self, voluntarily rather than through compulsion; for it is incredible how greatly the second prize in this contest is superior in real dignity and importance to the first prize in the others.

XXII. Such then may be said, by way of preface, to the discussion of that description of visions which are sent from God. But it is time now to turn to the subject itself, and to investigate, with accuracy, every portion of it.

The scripture therefore says, "And he dreamed a dream. And behold a ladder was planted firmly on the ground, the head of which reached to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending along it."‡ By the ladder in this thing, which is called the world, is figuratively understood the air, the foundation of which is the earth, and the head is the heaven; for the large interior space, which being extended in every direction, reaches from the orb of the moon, which is

* The marginal note in our bible translates Israel, "a prince of God."

† Genesis xxxii. 25; where, however, the expression of the bible is "the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint."

‡ Genesis xxviii. 12.

described as the most remote of the order in heaven, but the nearest to us by those who contemplate sublime objects, down to the earth, which is the lowest of such bodies, is the air. This air is the abode of incorporeal souls, since it seemed good to the Creator of the universe to fill all the parts of the world with living creatures. On this account he prepared the terrestrial animals for the earth, the aquatic animals for the sea and for the rivers, and the stars for the heaven; for every one of these bodies is not merely a living animal, but is also properly described as the very purest and most universal mind extending through the universe; so that there are living creatures in that other section of the universe, the air.

And if these things are not comprehensible by the outward senses, what of that? For the soul also is invisible. And yet it is probable that the air should nourish living animals even more than the land or the water. Why so? Because it is the air which has given vitality to those animals which live on the earth and in the water. For the Creator of the universe formed the air so that it should be the habit of those bodies which are immoveable, and the nature of those which are moved in an invisible manner, and the soul of such as are able to exert an impetus and visible sense of their own. Is it not then absurd that that element, by means of which the other elements have been filled with vitality, should itself be destitute of living things? Therefore let no one deprive the most excellent nature of living creatures of the most excellent of those elements which surround the earth; that is to say, of the air. For not only is it not alone deserted by all things besides, but rather, like a populous city, it is full of imperishable and immortal citizens, souls equal in number to the stars

Now of these souls some descend upon the earth with a view to being bound up in mortal bodies, those namely which are most nearly connected with the earth, and which are lovers of the body. But some soar upwards, being again distinguished according to the definitions and times which have been appointed by nature. Of these, those which are influenced by desire for mortal life, and which have been familiarised to it, again return to it. But others, condemning the body of great folly and trifling, have pronounced it a prison and a grave, and, flying from it as from a house of correction or a tomb,

have raised themselves aloft on light wings towards the æther, and have devoted their whole lives to sublime speculations.

There are others, again, the purest and most excellent of all, which have received greater and more divine intellects, never by any chance desiring any earthly thing whatever, but being as it were lieutenants of the Ruler of the universe, as though they were the eyes and ears of the great king, beholding and listening to everything. Now philosophers in general are wont to call these demons, but the sacred scripture calls them angels, using a name more in accordance with nature. For indeed they do report (διαγγέλλουσι) the injunctions of the father to his children, and the necessities of the children to the father.

And it is in reference to this employment of theirs that the holy scripture has represented them as ascending and descending, not because God, who knows everything before any other being, has any need of interpreters; but because it is the lot of us miserable mortals to use speech as a mediator and intercessor; because of our standing in awe of and fearing the Ruler of the universe, and the all-powerful might of his authority; having received a notion of which he once entreated one of those mediators, saying: "Do thou speak for us, and let not God speak to us, lest we die."* For not only are we unable to endure his chastisements, but we cannot bear even his excessive and unmodified benefits, which he himself proffers us of his own accord, without employing the ministrations of any other beings.

Very admirably therefore does Moses represent the air under the figurative symbol of a ladder, as planted solidly in the earth and reaching up to heaven. For it comes to pass that the evaporations which are given forth by the earth becoming rarefied, are dissolved into air, so that the earth is the foundation and root of the air, and that the heaven is its head. Accordingly it is said that the moon is not an unadulterated consolidation of pure æther, as each of the other stars is, but is rather a combination of the æther-like and air-like essence For that black spot which appears in it, which some call a face, is nothing else but the air mingled with it, which is by nature black, and which extends as far as heaven.

XXIII. The ladder therefore in the world which is her

* Exodus xx. 19.

spoken of in this symbolical manner, was something of this sort. But if we carefully investigate the soul which exists in men, the foundation of which is something corporeal, and as it were earth-like, we shall find that foundation to be the outward sense; and the head to be something heavenly, as it were the most pure mind. But all the words of God move incessantly upwards and downwards through the whole of it, dragging it upwards along with them whenever they soar aloft, and separating it from whatever is mortal, and exhibiting to it a sight of those things which alone are worthy of being beheld; but yet not casting it down when they descend. For neither is God himself, nor the word of God, worthy of blame. But they join with them in their descent, by reason of their love for mankind and compassion for our race, for the sake of being their allies and rendering them assistance, in order that by breathing in a saving inspiration they may recall to life the soul which was still being tossed about in the body as in the river.

Now the God and governor of the universe does by himself and alone walk about invisibly and noiselessly in the minds of those who are purified in the highest degree. For there is extant a prophecy which was delivered to the wise man, in which it is said: "I will walk among you, and I will be your God."* But the angels—the words of God—move about in the minds of those persons who are still in a process of being washed, but who have not yet completely washed off the life which defiles them, and which is polluted by the contact of their heavy bodies, making them look pure and brilliant to the eyes of virtue.

But it is plain enough what vast numbers of evils are driven out, and what a multitude of wicked inhabitants is expelled in order that one good man may be introduced to dwell there. Do thou, therefore, O my soul, hasten to become the abode of God. his holy temple, to become strong from having been most weak. powerful from having been powerless, wise from having been foolish, and very reasonable from having been doting and childless.

And perhaps too the practiser of virtue represents his own life as like to a ladder; for the practice of anything is naturally an anomalous thing, since at one time it soars up to a height, and at another it turns downwards in a contrary direction; and at one time has a fair voyage like a ship, and at

* Leviticus xxvi. 12.

another has but an unfavourable passage; for, as some one says, the life of those who practise virtue is full of vicissitudes: being at one time alive and waking, and at another dead or sleeping. And perhaps this is no incorrect statement; for the wise have obtained the heavenly and celestial country as their habitation; having learnt to be continually mounting upwards, but the wicked have received as their share the dark recesses of hell, having from the beginning to the end of their existence practised dying, and having been from their infancy to their old age familiarised with destruction.

But the practisers of virtue, for they are on the boundary between two extremities, are frequently going upwards and downwards as if on a ladder, being either drawn upwards by a more powerful fate, or else being dragged down by that which is worse; until the umpire of this contention and conflict, namely God, adjudges the victory to the more excellent class and utterly destroys the other.

XXIV. There is also in this dream another sort of similitude or comparison apparent, which must not be passed over in silence; the affairs of mankind are naturally compared to a ladder, on account of their irregular motion and progress: for as some one or other has said; "One day has cast one man down from on high and destroyed him, and another it has raised up, nothing that belongs to our human race being formed by nature so as to remain long in the same condition, but all such things changing with all kinds of alteration. Do not men become rulers from having been private individuals, and private individuals from having been rulers, poor from having been rich, and very rich from having been poor; glorious from been despised, and most illustrious from having been infamous?" * * * *
A very beautiful way of life: for it is very possible that the being whose habitation is the whole world, may dwell with you also, and take care of your house, so that it may be completely protected and free from injury for ever; and there is such a way as this in which human affairs move upwards and downwards, meeting with an unstable and variable fortune, the anomalous character of which, unerring time proves by evidence which is not indistinct but manifest and legible.

XXV. But the dream also represented the archangel, namely the Lord himself, firmly planted on the ladder; for we

must imagine that the living God stands above all things, like the charioteer of a chariot, or the pilot of a ship; that is, above bodies, and above souls, and above all creatures, and above the earth, and above the air, and above the heaven, and above all the powers of the outward senses, and above the invisible natures, in short, above all things whether visible or invisible; for having made the whole to depend upon himself, he governs it and all the vastness of nature.

But let no one who hears that he was firmly planted thus suppose that any thing at all assists God, so as to enable him to stand firmly, but let him rather consider this fact that what is here indicated is equivalent to the assertion that the firmest position, and the bulwark, and the strength, and the steadiness of everything is the immoveable God, who stamps the character of immobility on whatever he pleases; for, in consequence of his supporting and consolidating things, those which he does combine remain firm and indestructible.

Therefore he who stands upon the ladder of heaven says to him who is beholding the dream, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; be not afraid."* This oracle and this vision were also the firmest support of the soul devoted to the practice of virtue, inasmuch as it taught it that the Lord and God of the universe is both these things also to his own race, being entitled both the Lord and God of all men, and of his grandfathers and ancestors, and being called by both names in order that the whole world and the man devoted to virtue might have the same inheritance; since it is also said, "The Lord himself is his inheritance."†

XXVI. But do not fancy that it is an accidental thing here for him to be called in this place the God and Lord of Abraham, but only the God of Isaac; for this latter is the symbol of the knowledge which exists by nature, which hears itself, and teaches itself, and learns of itself; but Abraham is the symbol of that which is derived from the teaching of others; and the one again is an indigenous and native inhabitant of his country, but the other is only a settler and a foreigner; for having forsaken the language of those who indulge in sublime conversations about astronomy, a language imitating that of the Chaldæans, foreign and barbarous, he was

* Genesis xxviii. 13. † Deuteronomy x. 9.

brought over to that which was suited to a rational being, namely, to the service of the great Cause of all things.

Now this disposition stands in need of two powers to take care of it, the power that is of authority, and that of conferring benefits, in order that in accordance with the authority of the governor, it may obey the admonitions which it receives, and also that it may be greatly benefited by his beneficence. But the other disposition stands in need of the power of beneficence only; for it has not derived any improvement from the authority which admonishes it, inasmuch as it naturally claims virtue as its own, but by reason of the bounty which is showered upon it from above, it was good and perfect from the beginning; therefore God is the name of the beneficent power, and Lord is the title of the royal power.

What then can any one call a more ancient and important good, than to be thought worthy to meet with unmixed and unalloyed beneficence? And what can be less valuable than to receive a mixture of authority and liberality? And it appears to me that it was because the practiser of virtue saw that he uttered that most admirable prayer that, "the Lord might be to him as God;"* for he desired no longer to stand in awe of him as a governor, but to honour and love him as a benefactor. Now is it not fitting that even blind men should become sharp-sighted in their minds to these and similar things, being endowed with the power of sight by the most sacred oracles, so as to be able to contemplate the glories of nature, and not to be limited to the mere understanding of the words? But even if we voluntarily close the eye of our soul and take no care to understand such mysteries, or if we are unable to look up to them, the hierophant himself stands by and prompts us. And do not thou ever cease through weariness to anoint thy eyes until you have introduced those who are duly initiated to the secret light of the sacred scriptures, and have displayed to them the hidden things therein contained, and their reality, which is invisible to those who are uninitiated.

It is becoming then for you to act thus; but as for ye, O souls, who have once tasted of divine love, as if you had even awakened from deep sleep, dissipate the mist that is before you; and hasten forward to that beautiful spectacle, putting aside slow and hesitating fear, in order to comprehend all the

* Genesis xxviii. 21

beautiful sounds and sights which the president of the games has prepared for your advantage.

XXVII. There are then a countless number of things well worthy of being displayed and demonstrated; and among them one which was mentioned a little while ago; for the oracle calls the person who was really his grandfather, the father of the practiser of virtue, and to him who was really his father, it has not given any such title; for the scripture says, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father," but in reality Abraham was his grandfather; and then proceeds, "And the God of Isaac," and in this case he does not add, "thy father:" is it not then worth while to examine into the cause of this difference? Undoubtedly it is; let us then in a careful manner apply ourselves to the consideration of the cause.

Philosophers say that virtue exists among men, either by nature, or by practice, or by learning. On which account the sacred scriptures represent the three founders of the nation of the Israelites as wise men; not indeed originally endowed with the same kind of wisdom, but arriving rapidly at the same end. For the eldest of them, Abraham, had instruction for his guide in the road which conducted him to virtue; as we shall show in another treatise to the best of our power. And Isaac, who is the middle one of the three, had a self-taught and self-instructed nature. And Jacob, the third, arrived at this point by industry and practice, in accordance with which were his labours of wrestling and contention.

Since then there are thus three different manners by which wisdom exists among men, it happens that the two extremes are the most nearly and frequently united. For the virtue which is acquired by practice, is the offspring of that which is derived from learning. But that which is implanted by nature is indeed akin to the others, for it is set below them, as the root for them all. But it has obtained its prize without any rivalry or difficulty. So that it is thus very natural for Abraham, as one who had been improved by instruction, to be called the father of Jacob, who arrived at his height of virtue by practice. By which expression is indicated not so much the relationship of one man to the other, but that the power which is fond of hearing is very ready for learning; the power which is devoted to practice being also well suited for wrestling. If,

* Genesis xxviii. 13.

however, this practiser of virtue runs on vigorously towards the end and learns to see clearly what he previously only dreamed of in an indistinct way, being altered and re-stamped with a better character, and being called Israel, that is, "the man who sees God," instead of Jacob, that is, "the supplanter," he then is no longer set down as the son of Abraham, as his father, of him who derived wisdom from instruction, but as the son of Israel, who was born excellent by nature.

These statements are not fables of my own invention, but are the oracle written on the sacred pillars. For, says the scripture: "Israel having departed, he and all that he had came to the well of the oath, and there he sacrificed a sacrifice to the God of his father Isaac."* Do you not now perceive that this present assertion has reference not to the relationship between mortal men, but, as was said before, to the nature of things? For look at what is before us. At one time, Jacob is spoken of as the son of his father Abraham, and at another time he is called Israel, the son of Isaac, on account of the reason which we have thus accurately investigated.

XXVIII. Having then said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham, the father and the God of Isaac," he adds: "Be not afraid," very consistently. For how can we any longer be afraid when we have thee, O God, as our armour and defender? Thee, the deliverer from fear and from every painful feeling? Thee, who hast also fashioned the archetypal forms of our instruction while they were still indistinct, so as to make them visible, teaching Abraham wisdom, and begetting Isaac, who was wise from his birth. For you condescended to be called the guide of the one and the father of the other, assigning to the one the rank of a pupil, and to the other that of a son.

For this reason, too, God promised that he would give him the land. I mean by the land here, all-prolific virtue, on which the practiser rests from his contests and sleeps, from the fact of the life according to the outward sense being lulled asleep, and that of the soul being awakened. Receiving gladly peaceful repose there, which he did not obtain without war, and the afflictions which arise from war, not by means of bearing arms and slaying men; away with any such notion! but by overthrowing the array of vices and passions which are the adversaries of virtue.

* Genesis xlvi. 1.

But the race of wisdom is likened to the sand of the sea, by reason of its boundless numbers, and because also the sand, like a fringe, checks the incursions of the sea; as the reasonings of instruction beat back the violence of wickedness and iniquity. And these reasonings, in accordance with the divine promises, are extended to the very extremities of the universe. And they show that he who is possessed of them is the inheritor of all the parts of the world, penetrating everywhere, to the east, and to the west, to the south, and to the north. For it is said in the scripture: "He shall be extended towards the sea, and towards the south, and towards the north, and towards the east."* But the wise and virtuous man is not only a blessing to himself, but he is also a common good to all men, diffusing advantages over all from his own ready store. For as the sun is the light of all those beings who have eyes, so also is the wise man light to all those who partake of a rational nature.

XXIX. "For in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And this oracle applies to the wise man in respect of himself, and also in respect of others.† For if the mind which is in me is purified by perfect virtue, and if the tribes of that earthly part which is about me are purified at the same time, which tribes have fallen to the lot of the external senses, and of the greatest channel of all, namely the body; and if any one, either in his house, or in his city, or in his country, or in his nation, becomes a lover of wisdom, it is inevitable that that house, and that city, and that country, and that nation, must attain to a better life. For, as those spices which are set on fire fill all persons near them with their fragrance, so in the same manner do all those persons who are neighbours of and contiguous to the wise man catch some of the exhalations which reach to a distance from him, and so become improved in their characters.

XXX. And it is the greatest of all advantages to a soul engaged in labours and contests, to have for its fellow traveller, God, who penetrates everywhere. "For behold," says God, "I am with thee."‡ Of what then can we be in need while we have for our wealth Thee, who art the only true and real

* Genesis xxviii. 14.

† The text is very corrupt here. I have followed Mangey's reading and translation.

‡ Genesis xxviii. 15.

riches, who keepest us in the road which leads to virtue in all its different divisions? For it is not one portion only of the rational life which conducts to justice and to all other virtue, but the parts are infinite in number, from which those who desire to arrive at virtue can set out.

XXXI. Very admirably therefore is it said in the scripture: "I will lead thee back to this land." For it was fitting that the reason should remain with itself, and should not depart to the outward sense. And if it has departed, then the next best thing is for it to return back again. And perhaps also a doctrine bearing on the immortality of the soul is figuratively intimated by this expression. For the soul, having left the region of heaven, as was mentioned a little while before, came to the body as to a foreign country. Therefore the father who begot it promises that he will not permit it to be for ever held in bondage, but that he will have compassion on it, and will unloose its chains, and will conduct it in safety and freedom as far as the metropolis, and will not cease to assist it till the promises which he has made in words are confirmed by the truth of actions. For it is by all means the peculiar attribute of God to foretell what is to happen.

And why do we say this? for his words do not differ from his actions; therefore the soul which is devoted to the practice of virtue, being set in motion, and roused up to the investigations relating to the living God, at first suspected that the living God existed in place; but after a short space it became perplexed by the difficulty of the question, and began to change its opinion. "For," says the scripture, "Jacob awoke and said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not;" and it would have been better, I should have said: not to know it, than to fancy that God existed in any place, he who himself contains all things in a circle.

XXXII. Very naturally, therefore, was Jacob afraid, and said in a spirit of admiration, "how dreadful is this place."* For, in truth, of all the topics or places in natural philosophy, the most formidable is that in which it is inquired where the living God is, and whether in short he is in any place at all. Since some persons affirm that everything which exists occupies some place or other, and others assign each thing a different place, either in the world or out of the world, in

* Genesis xxviii. 16.

some space between the different bodies of the universe. Others again affirm that the uncreated God resembles no created being whatever, but that he is superior to everything, so that the very swiftest conception is outstripped by him, and confesses that it is very far inferior to the comprehension of him; wherefore it speedily cries out, This is not what I expected, because the Lord is in the place; for he surrounds everything, but in truth and reason he is not surrounded by anything.

And this thing which is demonstrated and visible, this world perceptible by the outward senses, is nothing else but the house of God, the abode of one of the powers of the true God, in accordance with which he is good; and he calls this world an abode, and he has also pronounced it with great truth to be the gate of heaven. Now, what does this mean? We cannot comprehend the world which consists of various species, in that which is fashioned in accordance with the divine regulations, appreciable only by the intellect, in any other manner than by making a migration upwards from this other world perceptible by the outward senses and visible; for it is not possible either to perceive any other existing being which is incorporeal, without deriving our principles of judgment from bodies. For while they are quiet, their place is perceived, and when they are in motion we judge of their time; but the points, and the lines, and the superficies, and in short the boundaries . . . . . * as of a garment wrapped externally around it.

According to analogy, therefore, the knowledge of the world appreciable by the intellect is attained to by means of our knowledge of that which is perceptible by the outward senses, which is as it were a gate to the other. For as men who wish to see cities enter in through the gates, so also they who wish to comprehend the invisible world are conducted in their search by the appearance of the visible one. And the world of that essence which is only open to the intellect without any visible appearance or figure whatever, and which exists only in the archetypal idea which exists in the mind, which is fashioned according to its appearance, will be brought on with-

* There is an hiatus here, which cannot be filled up satisfactorily. The whole of the rest of the chapter is pronounced by Mangey to be obscure and corrupt, and almost unintelligible.

out any shade; all the walls, and all the gates which could impede its progress being removed, so that it is not looked at through any other medium, but by itself, putting forth a beauty which is susceptible of no change, presenting an indescribable and exquisite spectacle.

XXXIII. But enough of this. There is another dream also which belongs to the same class, that one I mean about the spotted flock, which the person who beheld it relates after he had awoke, saying, "The angel of God spake unto me in a dream, and said, Jacob; and I said, What is it? And he said unto me, Look up with thine eyes, and see the goats and the rams mounting on the flocks, and the she-goats, some white, and spotted, and ring-straked, and speckled: for I have beheld all that Laban does unto thee. I am that God who was seen by thee in the place of God, where thou anointedst the pillar, and vowedst a vow unto me. Now therefore, rise up and depart out of this land, and go into the land of thy birth, and I will be with thee."*

You see here, that the divine word speaks of dreams as sent from God; including in this statement not those only which appear through the agency of the chief cause itself, but those also which are seen through the operation of his interpreters and attendant angels, who are thought by the father who created them to be worthy of a divine and blessed lot: consider, however, what comes afterwards. The sacred word enjoins some persons what they ought to do by positive command, like a king; to others it suggests what will be for their advantage, as a preceptor does to his pupils; to others again, it is like a counsellor suggesting the wisest plans; and in this way too, it is of great advantage to those who do not of themselves know what is expedient; to others it is like a friend, in a mild and persuasive manner, bringing forward many secret things which no uninitiated person may lawfully hear.

For at times it asks some persons, as for instance, Adam, "Where art thou?" And any one may properly answer to such a question, "No where?" Because all human affairs never remain long in the same condition, but are moved about and changed, whether we speak of their soul or their body, or of their external circumstances; for their minds are unstable, not always having the same impressions from the same things, but

* Genesis xxxi. 11.

such as are diametrically contrary to their former ones. The body also is unstable, as all the changes of the different ages from infancy to old age show; their external circumstances also are variable, being tossed up and down by the impetus of ever-agitated fortune.

XXXIV. When, however, he comes into an assembly of friends, he does not begin to speak before he has first accosted each individual among them, and addressed him by name, so that they prick up their ears, and are quiet and attentive, listening to the oracles thus delivered, so as never to forget them or let them escape their memory: since in another passage of scripture we read, "Be silent and listen."* In this manner too, Moses is called up to the bush. For, the scripture says, "When he saw that he was turning aside to see, God called him out of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses: and he said, What is it, Lord?"†

And Abraham also, on the occasion of offering up his beloved and only son as a burnt-offering, when he was beginning to sacrifice him, and when he had given proof of his piety, was forbidden to destroy the self-taught race, Isaac by name, from among men; for at the beginning of his account of this transaction, Moses says that "God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham, Abraham; and he said, Behold, here am I. And he said unto him, Take now thy beloved son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up." And when he had brought the victim to the altar, then the angel of the Lord called him out of heaven, saying, "Abraham, Abraham," and he answered, "Behold, here am I. And he said, Lay not thy hand upon the child, and do nothing to him."‡

Also the practiser of virtue is also called one of this company dear to God, being deservedly accounted worthy of the same honour; for, says the scripture, "The angel of God said to me in my sleep, Jacob: and I answered, and said, What is it?"§ But after he has been called he exerts his attention, endeavouring to arrive at an accurate knowledge of the symbols which are displayed to him; and these symbols are the connection and generation of reasonings, as flocks and herds. For, says the scripture, "Jacob, looking up with his eyes, saw the goats and the rams leaping upon the she-goats and

* Deuteronomy xxvii. 9.
† Exodus iii. 4.
‡ Genesis xxii. 1.
§ Genesis xxxi. 10.

upon the sheep." Now the he-goat is the leader of the flock of goats, and the ram is the leader of the flock of sheep, and these two animals are symbols of perfect reasonings, one of which purifies and cleanses the soul of sins, and the other nourishes it and renders it full of good actions.

Such then are the leaders of the flocks in us, namely, reasons; and the flocks themselves, resembling the sheep and goats whose names they bear, rush forwards and hasten with zeal and earnestness towards justice.

Therefore, looking up with the eye of his mind, which up to that time had been closed, he saw the perfect and thoroughly sharpened reasons analogically resembling the goats and rams, prepared for the diminution of offences and the increase of good actions. And he beheld how they leap upon the sheep and the goats, that is on those souls which are still young and tender, and in the vigour of youth, and beautiful in the flower of their age; not pursuing irrational pleasure, but indulging in the invisible sowing of the doctrines of prudence. For this is a marriage which is blessed in its children; not uniting bodies, but adapting perfect virtues to well-disposed souls.

Therefore do all ye right reasons of wisdom leap up, form connections, sow seed, and pass by no soul which you see rich and fertile, and well-disposed, and virgin; but inviting it to association and connection with you, render it perfect and pregnant; for so you will become the parents of all kinds of good things, of a male offspring, white, variegated, ring-straked, and speckled.

XXXV. But we must now examine what power each of these offspring has. Now those which are purely white (διάλευκοι) are the most beautiful and the most conspicuous; the word διά being often prefixed in composition by way of adding force to the word, so that the words διάδηλον and διάσημον are commonly used to signify what is very conspicuous (δῆλον) and very remarkable (ἐπίσημον); therefore them eaning here is that the first-born offspring of the soul which has received the sacred seed, is purely white; being like light in which there is no obscurity, and like the most brilliant radiance: like the unclouded beam which might proceed from the rays of the sun in fine weather at mid-day. Again, by the statement that some are variegated, what is meant is, not that the flocks are marked by such a multiform and various spottedness as to resemble the

unclean leprosy, and which is an emblem of a life unsteady and tossed about in any direction by reason of the fickleness of the mind, but only that they have marks drawn in regular lines and different characters, shaped and impressed with all kinds of well approved forms, the peculiarities of which, being mingled together and combined properly, will produce a musical harmony.

For some persons have looked upon the art of variegating as so random and obscure a matter, that they have referred it to weavers. But I admire not only the art itself, but the name likewise, and most especially so when I look upon the divisions of the earth and the spheres in heaven, and the differences between various plants and various animals, and that most variegated texture, I mean the world; for I am compelled to suppose, that the maker of this universal textile fabric was also the inventor of all varied and variegating science; and I look with reverence upon the inventor, and I honour the art which he invented, and I am amazed at the work which is the result, and this too, though it is but a very small portion of it which I have been able to see, but still, from the portion which has been unfolded to me, if indeed I may say that it has been unfolded, I hope to form a tolerably accurate judgment of the whole, guiding my conjectures by the light of analogy.

Nevertheless I admire the lover of wisdom for having studied the same art, collecting and thinking fit to weave together many things, though different, and proceeding from different sources, into the same web; for taking the two first elements from the grammatical knowledge imparted to children, that is to say, reading and writing, and taking from the more perfect growth of knowledge the skill which is found among poets, and the comprehension of ancient history, and deriving certainty and freedom from deception from arithmetic and geometry, in which sciences there is need of proportions and calculations; and borrowing from music rhyme, and metre, and harmonies, and chromatics, and diatonics, and combined and disjoined melodies; and having derived from rhetoric invention, and language, and arrangement, and memory, and action; and from philosophy, whatever has been omitted in any of these separate branches, and all the other things of which human life consists, he has put together in one most admirably arranged

work, combining great learning of one kind witn great learning of another kind.

Now the sacred scripture calls the maker of this compound work Besaleel, which name, being interpreted, signifies "in the shadow of God;" for he makes all the copies, and the man by name Moses makes all the models, as the principal architect; and for this reason it is, that the one only draws outlines as it were, but the other is not content with such sketches, but makes the archetypal natures themselves, and has already adorned the holy places with his variegating art; but the wise man is called the only adorner of the place of wisdom in the oracles delivered in the sacred scriptures.

XXXVI. And the most beautiful and varied work of God, this world, has been created in this its present state of perfection by all-wise knowledge; and how can it be anything but right to receive the art of variegating as a noble effort of knowledge? the most sacred copy of which is the whole word of wisdom, which will bear about in its bosom the things of heaven and of earth, from which the practiser of virtue elaborates his notions of various things.

For after the white sheep he immediately beheld the variegated animals, stamped with the impression of instruction. The third kind are the ring-straked and speckled; and what man in his senses would deny that these also are, as to their genus, variegated? but still he is not so very eager about the varieties of the members of the flocks, as about the road which leads to virtue and excellence; for the prophet intends that he who proceeds along this road shall be besprinkled with dust and water; because it is related that the earth and water being kneaded together and fashioned into shape by the Creator of man, was formed into one body, not being made by hand, but being the work of invisible nature.

Therefore it is the first principle of wisdom not to forget one's self, and always to keep before one's eyes the materials of which one has been compounded; for in this way a man will get rid of boasting and arrogance, which of all evils is the one most hated by God; for who that ever admits into his mind the recollection that the first principles of his formation are dust and water, would ever be so puffed by vanity as to be unduly elated? On this account the prophet has thought it *fit that those* who are about to offer sacrifice shall be be

sprinkled with the aforesaid things; thinking no one worthy to appear at a sacrifice who has not first of all learnt to know himself, and to comprehend the nothingness of mankind, and the elements of which he is composed, conjecturing from them that he himself is utterly insignificant.

XXXVII. These three signs, the white, the variegated, and the ring-straked and speckled, are as yet imperfect in the practiser of virtue, who has not himself as yet attained to perfection. But, in the case of him who is perfect, they also appear to be perfect. And in what manner they appear so we will examine. The sacred scripture has appointed that the great High Priest, when he was about to perform the ministrations appointed by the law, should be besprinkled with water and ashes in the first place, that he might come to a remembrance of himself. For the wise Abraham also, when he went forth to converse with God, pronounced himself to be dust and ashes. In the second place, it enjoins him to put on a tunic reaching down to his feet, and the variously-embroidered thing which was called his breast-plate, an image and representation of the light-giving stars which appear in heaven.

For there are, as it seems, two temples belonging to God; one being this world, in which the high priest is the divine word, his own first-born son. The other is the rational soul, the priest of which is the real true man, the copy of whom, perceptible to the senses, is he who performs his paternal vows and sacrifices, to whom it is enjoined to put on the aforesaid tunic, the representation of the universal heaven, in order that the world may join with the man in offering sacrifice, and that the man may likewise co-operate with the universe.

He is now therefore shown to have these two things, the speckled and the variegated character. We will now proceed to explain the third and most perfect kind, which is denominated thoroughly white. When this same high priest enters into the innermost parts of the holy temple, he is clothed in the variegated garment, and he also assumes another linen robe, made of the very finest flax. And this is an emblem of vigour, and incorruptibility, and the most brilliant light. For such a veil is a thing very difficult to be broken, and it is made of nothing mortal, and when it is properly and carefully purified it has a most clear and brilliant appearance. And these instructions contain this figurative meaning, that of those who in

a pure and guileless spirit serve the living God, there is one who does not at first depend upon the firmness and obstinacy of his mind, despising all human affairs, which allure men with their specious bait, and injure them, and produce weakness in them. In the next place, he aims at immortality, laughing at the blind inventions with which mortals delude themselves. And last of all, he shines with the unclouded and most brilliant light of truth, no longer desiring any of the things which belong to false opinion, which prefer darkness rather than light.

XXXVIII. The great high priest of the confession, then, may have now been sufficiently described by us, being stamped with the impressions above-mentioned, the white, the variegated, and the ring-straked and speckled. But he who is desirous of the administration of human affairs, by name Joseph, does not, as it appears, claim for himself any of the extreme characteristics, but only that variegated one which is in the middle between the others. For we read that Joseph had a coat of many colours,"* not being sprinkled with the sacred purifications, by means of which he might have known that he himself was only a compound of dust and water, and not being able to touch that thoroughly white and most shining raiment, virtue. But being clothed in the much-variegated web of political affairs, with which the smallest possible portion of truth is mixed up; and also many and large portions of plausible, probable, and likely falsehoods, from which all the sophists of Egypt, and all the augurs, and ventriloquists, and sorcerers spring; men skilful in juggling, and in incantations, and in tricks of all kinds, from whose treacherous arts it is very difficult to escape.

And it is on this account that Moses very naturally represents this robe as stained with blood; since the whole life of the man who is mixed up in political affairs is tainted, warring on others and being warred against, and being aimed at, and attacked, and shot at by all the unexpected chances which befall him.

Examine now the man who has great influence with the people, on whom the affairs of the city depend. Do not be alarmed at those who look with admiration upon him; and you will find many diseases lurking within him, and you will see

* Genesis xxxvii. 3.

that he is entangled in many disasters, and that fortune is dragging him violently in different directions, though he bends his neck the other way, and resists, although invisibly, and in fact that fortune is seeking to overthrow and destroy him; or else the people themselves are impatient at his supremacy, or he is exposed to the attacks of some more powerful rival. And envy is a formidable enemy, and one hard to be shaken off, clinging also to everything that is called good fortune, and it is not easy to escape from it.

XXXIX. What reason is there then for our congratulating ourselves on the administration of political affairs as if we were clothed in a garment of many colours, deceived by its external splendour, and not perceiving its ugliness, which is kept out of sight, and hidden, and full of treachery and guile? Let us then put off this flowery robe, and put on that sacred one woven with the embroideries of virtue; for thus we shall escape the snares which want of skill, and ignorance, and want of knowledge, and education lay for us, of which Laban is the companion. For when the sacred word has purified us with the sprinklings prepared beforehand for purification, and when it has adorned us with the select reasonings of true philosophy, and, having led us to that man who has stood the test, has made us genuine, and conspicuous, and shining, it blames the treacherous disposition which seeks to raise itself up to invalidate what is said.

For the scripture says: "I have seen what Laban does unto thee,"* namely, things contrary to the benefits which I conferred on you, things impure, wicked, and altogether suited to darkness. But it is not right for the man who anchors on the hope of the alliance of God to crouch and tremble, to whom God says, "I am the God who was seen by thee in the place of God." A very glorious boast for the soul, that God should think fit to appear to and to converse with it. And do not pass by what is here said, but examine it accurately, and see whether there are really two Gods. For it is said: "I am the God who was seen by thee;" not in my place, but in the place of God, as if he meant of some other God.

What then ought we to say? There is one true God only: but they who are called Gods, by an abuse of language, are numerous; on which account the holy scripture on the present

* Genesis xxxi. 12.

occasion indicates that it is the true God that is meant by the use of the article, the expression being, "I am the God (ὁ Θεὸς);" but when the word is used incorrectly, it is put without the article, the expression being, "He who was seen by thee in the place," not of the God (τοῦ Θεοῦ), but simply "of God" (Θεοῦ); and what he here calls God is his most ancient word, not having any superstitious regard to the position of the names, but only proposing one end to himself, namely, to give a true account of the matter; for in other passages the sacred historian, when he considered whether there really was any name belonging to the living God, showed that he knew that there was none properly belonging to him; but that whatever appellation any one may give him, will be an abuse of terms; for the living God is not of a nature to be described, but only to be.

XL. And a proof of this may be found in the oracular answer given by God to the person who asked what name he had, "I am that I am,"* that the questioner might know the existence of those things which it was not possible for man to conceive not being connected with God. Accordingly, to the incorporeal souls which are occupied in his service, it is natural for him to appear as he is, conversing with them as a friend with his friends; but to those souls which are still in the body he must appear in the resemblance of the angels, though without changing his nature (for he is unchangeable), but merely implanting in those who behold him an idea of his having another form, so that they fancy that it is his image, not an imitation of him, but the very archetypal appearance itself.

There is then an old story much celebrated, that the Divinity, assuming the resemblance of men of different countries, goes round the different cities of men, searching out the deeds of iniquity and lawlessness; and perhaps, though the fable is not true, it is a suitable and profitable one. But the scripture, which at all times advances its conceptions with respect to the Deity, in a more reverential and holy tone, and which likewise desires to instruct the life of the foolish, has spoken of God under the likeness of a man, though not of any particular man, attributing to him, with this view, the possession of a face, and hands, and feet, and of a mouth and voice, and also anger and

* Exodus iii. 14.

passion, and moreover, defensive weapons, and goings in and goings out, and motions upwards and downwards, and in every direction, not indeed using all these expressions with strict truth, but having regard to the advantage of those who are to learn from it; for the writers knew that some men are very dull in their natures, so as to be utterly unable to form any conception whatever of God apart from a body, whom it would be impossible to admonish if they were to speak in any other style than the existing one, of representing God as coming and departing like a man; and as descending and ascending, and as using his voice, and as being angry with sinners, and being implacable in his anger; and speaking too of his darts and swords, and whatever other instruments are suitable to be employed against the wicked, as being all previously ready.

For we must be content if such men can be brought to a proper state, by the fear which is suspended over them by such descriptions; and one may almost say that these are the only two paths taken, in the whole history of the law; one leading to the plain truth, owing to which we have such assertions as, "God is not as a man;"* the other, that which has regard to the opinions of foolish men, in reference to whom it is said, "The Lord God shall instruct you, like as if a man instructs his son."†

XLI. Why then do we any longer wonder, if God at times assumes the likeness of the angels, as he sometimes assumes even that of men, for the sake of assisting those who address their entreaties to him? so that when he says, "I am the God who was seen by thee in the place of God;"‡ we must understand this, that he on that occasion took the place of an angel, as far as appearance went, without changing his own real nature, for the advantage of him who was not, as yet, able to bear the sight of the true God; for as those who are not able to look upon the sun itself, look upon the reflected rays of the sun as the sun itself, and upon the halo around the moon as if it were the moon itself; so also do those who are unable to bear the sight of God, look upon his image, his angel word, as himself.

Do you not see that encyclical instruction, that is, Hagar

* Numbers xxiii. 19. † Deut. i. 31. ‡ Genesis xxxi. 13.

says to the angel, "Art thou God who seest me?"* for she was not capable of beholding the most ancient cause, inasmuch as she was by birth a native of Egypt. But now the mind begins to be improved, so as to be able to contemplate the governor of all the powers; on which account he says himself, "I am the Lord God,"† I whose image you formerly beheld instead of me, and whose pillar you set up, engraving on it a most sacred inscription; and the inscription indicated that I stood alone, and that I established the nature of all things, bringing disorder and irregularity into order and regularity, and supporting the universe firmly, so that it might rest on a firm and solid foundation, my own ministering word.

XLII. For the pillar is the symbol of three things; of standing, of dedication, and of an inscription: now the standing and the inscription have been described, but the dedication it is necessary should be explained to all men. For heaven and the world are an offering dedicated to God who made them; and all the cosmopolitan and God-loving souls, which dedicate and consecrate themselves to him, not allowing any mortal thing to drag them in an opposite direction, are never weary of hallowing their own life, and adorning it with every kind of beauty as a meet offering for him. And he is a foolish man who does not set up a pillar to God, but who erects one to himself instead, attributing stability to the things of creation, which is tossed about in every direction, and thinking those things worthy of inscriptions and panegyrics, which are in reality full of matter for blame and accusation, and which as such had better never have been mentioned in an inscription at all, or if they had, had better have been speedily erased again.

On which account the holy scripture says distinctly, "Thou shalt not set up a pillar to thyself;"‡ for in truth there is nothing belonging to man that is stable, no, not though some persons persist even so obstinately in affirming it. But they not only think that they stand firmly, but also that they are worthy of honours and inscriptions, forgetting him who is alone worthy of honour, and who is alone firmly fixed; for while they are turning aside and wandering away from the path which leads to virtue, the outward sense leads them still more astray, that is to say, the woman who is akin to them, she also

* Genesis xvi. 13. † Genesis xxxi. 13. ‡ Deut. xvi. 22.

compels them to run ashore; therefore, the whole soul, like a ship,* being shut in all around, is offered up as a pillar; for the sacred scriptures tell us that Lot's wife having turned back to look behind her, became a pillar of salt, and this is said very naturally and fitly; for if any one does not look forwards at those things which are worthy of being seen and heard (and these things are the virtues and the actions done in accordance with virtue), but looks backwards at the things which are behind him, at deaf glory, and blind riches, and senseless vigour of body, and an empty elegance of mind, pursuing these objects only, and such as are akin to them, he will lie as a lifeless pillar melting away by itself; for salt is not a thing to preserve his firmness.

XLIII. Very admirably therefore does the practiser of virtue, having learnt by continued study that creation is a thing in its own nature moveable, but that the uncreated God is unchangeable and immoveable, erect a pillar to God, and anoint it after he has erected it; for God says, "Thou hast anointed my pillar."† But do not fancy that that stone was anointed with oil, but understand rather that that opinion, that God is the only being who stands firmly, was thoroughly hardened by exercise, and established in the soul by the science of wrestling, not that science by which bodies are made fat, but that by which the mind acquires strength and irresistible vigour; for the man who is eager in the pursuit of good studies and virtuous objects is fond of labours, and fond of exercises; so that very naturally, having worked out the science of training which is the sister of the art of medicine, he anoints and brings to perfection all the reasonings of virtue and piety, and dedicates them, as a most beautiful and lasting offering to God.

For this reason, after mentioning the dedication of the pillar, God adds that, "Thou vowedst a vow to me." Now a vow also is, to speak properly, a dedication, since he who makes a vow is said to offer up, as a gift to God, not only his own possessions, but himself likewise, who is the owner of them: for says the scripture, "the man is holy who nourishes the locks of the hair of his head; who has vowed a vow." But if he is holy he

* Mangey thinks that this passage is corrupt, and proposes to alter ναῦς into ἄπνους, "dead," but it seems unnecessary.

† Genesis xxxi. 13.

is undoubtedly an offering to God, no longer meddling with anything unholy or profane; and there is an evidence in favour of my argument, in the conduct of the prophetess, and mother of a prophet, Hannah, whose name being translated, signifies grace; for she says that she gives her son, "Samuel, as a gift to the Holy One,"* not dedicating him more as a human being, than as a disposition full of inspiration, and possessed by a divinely sent impulse; and the name Samuel being interpreted means, "appointed to God."

Why then, O my soul, do you any longer waste yourself in vain speculations and labours? and why do you not go as a pupil to the practiser of virtue, taking up arms against the passions, and against vain opinion, to learn from him the way to wrestle with them? For as soon as you have learnt this art, you will become the leader of a flock, not of one which is destitute of marks, and of reason, and of docility, but of one which is well approved, and rational, and beautiful, of which, if you become the leader, you will pity the miserable race of mankind, and will not cease to reverence the Deity; and you will never be weary of blessing God, and moreover you will engrave hymns suited to your sacred subject upon pillars, that you may not only speak fluently, but may also sing musically the virtues of the living God; for by these means you will be able to return to your father's house, being delivered from a long and profitless wandering in a foreign land.

A TREATISE

ON THE

DOCTRINE THAT DREAMS ARE SENT FROM GOD.

BOOK II.

I. In describing the third species of dreams which are sent from God, we very naturally call on Moses as an ally, in order that as he learnt, having previously been ignorant, so he may instruct us who are also ignorant, concerning these signs, illustrating each separate one of them.

* 1 Samuel i. 28.

Now this third species of dreams exists, whenever in sleep the mind being set in motion by itself, and agitating itself, is filled with frenzy and inspiration, so as to predict future events by a certain prophetic power. For the first kind of dreams which we mentioned, was that which proceeded from God as the author of its motion, and, as some invisible manner prompted us what was indistinct to us, but well known to himself. The second kind was when our own intellect was set in motion simultaneously with the soul of the universe, and became filled with divine madness, by means of which it is allowed to prognosticate events which are about to happen; and for this reason the interpreter of the sacred will very plainly and clearly speaks of dreams, indicating by this expression the visions which appear according to the first species, as if God, by means of dreams, gave suggestions which were equivalent to distinct and precise oracles. Of the visions according to the second species he speaks neither very clearly nor very obscurely; an instance of which is afforded by the vision which was exhibited of the ladder reaching up to heaven; for this vision was an enigmatical one; nevertheless, the meaning was not hidden from those who were able to see with any great acuteness.

But these visions which are afforded according to the third species of dreams, being less clear than the two former kinds by reason of their having an enigmatical meaning deeply seated and fully coloured, require the science of an interpreter of dreams. At all events all the dreams of this class, which are recorded by the lawgiver, are interpreted by men who are skilled in the aforesaid art.

Whose dreams then am I here alluding to? Surely every one must see to those of Joseph, and of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to those which the chief baker and the chief butler saw themselves; and it may be well at all times to begin our instruction with the first instances.

Now the first dreams are those which Joseph beheld, receiving two visions from the two parts of the world, heaven and earth. From the earth the dream about the harvest; and that is as follows, "I thought that we were all binding sheaves in the middle of the field; and my sheaf stood up."* And the other relates to the circle of the zodiac, and is, "They

* Genesis xxxvii. 7.

worshipped me as the sun and the moon and the eleven stars." And the interpretation of the former one, which was delivered with great violence of reproof, is as follows, "Shall you be a king and reign over us? or shall you be a lord and lord it over us?" The interpretation of the second is again full of just indignation, "Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren come and fall down upon the ground and worship thee?"

II. Let these things be laid down first by way of foundation; and on this foundation let us raise up the rest of the building, following the rules of that wise architect, allegory, and accurately investigating each particular of the dreams; but first we must mention what it is requisite should be attended to before the dreams. Some persons have extended the nature of good over many things, and others have attributed it to the most excellent Being alone; some again have mixed it with other things, while others have spoken of it as unalloyed.

Those then who have called only what is honourable good, have preserved this nature free from alloy, and have attributed it only to what is most excellent, namely to the reason that is in us; but those who have mixed it have combined it with three things, the soul, the body, and external circumstances. And they who act thus are persons of a somewhat effeminate and luxurious way of life, being bred up the greater part of their time, from their earliest infancy, in the women's apartments and among the effeminate race which is found in the women's apartments. But those who argue differently are men inclined to a harder regimen, being bred up from their boyhood among men, and being themselves men in their minds, embracing what is right in preference to what is pleasant, and devoting themselves to nourishment fit for athletes for the sake of strength and vigour, not of pleasure.

Moses moreover represents two persons as leaders of these two companies. The leader of the noble and good company is the self-taught and self-instructed Isaac; for he records that he was weaned, not choosing to avail himself at all of tender, and milk-like, and childish, and infantine food, but only of such as was vigorous and perfect, inasmuch as he was formed by nature, from his very infancy, for acts of virtue, and was always in the prime and vigour of youth and energy. But the leader of the company, which yields and which is

inclined to softer measures, is Joseph; for he does not indeed neglect the virtues of the soul, but he likewise shows anxiety about the stability and permanence of the body, and also desires an abundance of worldly treasures; and it is in strict accordance with natural truth, that he is represented as drawn in different directions, since he proposes to himself many different objects in life; and being attracted by each of them, he is kept in a state of commotion and agitation, without being able to stand firm.

And his case is not like that of cities, which having made a truce enjoy peace, and yet after a time are again attacked, so as to gain the victory and to be defeated alternately; for at times a great influx of riches and glory coming upon them, subdues all their cares for the body and the soul, but afterwards, being repelled by both these things, they are conquered by the adversary; and in the same manner all the pleasures of the body coming upon the soul in a compact array overwhelm and efface all the objects of the intellect one after the other; and then, after a short time, wisdom, changing its course and blowing in the opposite direction with a fresh and violent breeze, causes the stream of the pleasures to slacken, and altogether moderates all the eagerness, and impetuosity, and rivalry of the external senses.

Such a circle then of never-ending war revolves around the soul, subject as it is to so many changes; for when one enemy has been destroyed, then immediately there springs up another more powerful, after the fashion of the many-headed hydra; for they say, that in the case of this monster, instead of the head which was cut off another sprung up, by which statement they mean to intimate the multiform, and prolific, and almost invincible character of undying wickedness.

Do not, therefore, answer . . . . . Joseph . . . . . .* but know that he is the image of multiform and mixed knowledge. For there appears in him a rational species of continence, which is of the masculine kind, being fashioned in accordance with his father Jacob; and also that kind which is devoid of reason is likewise visible, that of the outward sense I mean, being made in the likeness of his maternal race, according to Rachel. There appears in him also the seed of bodily plea-

* There is an hiatus here, and there is a good deal of corruption about the beginning of this book

sure, which his association with the chief butlers, and chief bakers, and chief cooks has stamped upon him. There is, also visible the seed of vain opinion, on which he mounts as on a chariot by reason of his levity, being puffed up, and elated, and raising himself to a height to the destruction of equality.

III. Now the character of Joseph is sketched out by the foregoing outlines. But each of his dreams must be investigated with accuracy; and first of all we must examine the one about the sheaves. "I thought," says he, "that we were all binding sheaves." The expression, "I thought," is clearly that of a person who is not certain, but who is hesitating and supposing with some amount of indistinctness, not of one who sees positively and clearly; for it is very natural for persons just awakening out of a deep sleep, and still dozing as it were, to say, "I thought;" but not so for people who are thoroughly awake, and who can see distinctly. And the practiser of virtue, Jacob, does not say, "I thought," but his language is, "Behold, a ladder firmly set, the head of which reached up to heaven."* And again he says, when "the sheep conceived I saw them with my eyes in my sleep, and behold the he-goats and the rams leapt upon the ewes and upon the she-goats, white, and variegated, and ring-straked, and speckled."† For it happens of necessity that the sleeping conceptions also of those who think what is honourable eligible for its own sake are more distinct and more pure, just as their waking actions are also more deserving of approbation.

IV. But when I hear Joseph relating his dream I marvel at his having fancied that he was binding up the sheaves, and not reaping the corn; for the one is the task of the lower classes and of servants, but the other is the occupation of the employers, and of men more skilled in agriculture. For to be able to distinguish what is necessary from what is mischievous, and what is nutritious from what is not so, and what is genuine from what is spurious, and useful fruit from a worthless root, not only in reference to those things which the land bears, but also in those which the intellect bears, is the work of most perfect virtue. Accordingly the holy scripture represents those who see, that is the sons of Israel, as reaping, and what is a most extraordinary thing, as reaping not barley or

* *Genesis xxviii. 12.* † Genesis xxxi. 10.

wheat, but the harvest itself; accordingly the language of Moses is, "When you reap your harvest, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your harvest."* For he means here that the virtuous man is not merely the judge of things which differ from one another, and that he does not only distinguish the things from which some produce is derived from the produce itself; but that he is able also to distinguish while reaping the harvest, to remove this opinion of his ability to distinguish, and to eradicate a man's own opinion of himself; because he is firmly persuaded, and believes Moses when he affirms that "judgment belongs to God alone,"† with whom are the comparisons and distinctions between all things; to whom it is well for a man to confess that he is inferior, a confession more glorious than the most renowned victory.

Now the reaping a harvest is like cutting a second time what has been cut already; which when some persons fond of novelty applied themselves to they found a circumcision of circumcision, and a purification of purification;‡ that is to say, they found that the purification of the soul was itself purified, attributing the power of making bright to God, and never fancying that they themselves were competent, without the assistance of the divine wisdom, to wash and cleanse a life which is full of stains.

Akin to this is the double cave, which is a symbol of the twofold and excellent recollections (the one existing in reference to the creature, and the other to the Creator), in which the virtuous man is bred up, contemplating the things which are in the world, and being also fond of inquiring about the father who made them; and it is owing to these twofold recollections, in my opinion, that the double symphony in music, that of the double diapason, was invented. For it was necessary that the work and the creator should be made happy in two most perfect melodies, and not both in the same one. For since the excellencies which were to be celebrated by them differed from one another, it followed of necessity that the melodies and symphonies should likewise differ from one another. The combined symphony being assigned to the world, which is a compound creation, composed of many different parts; and the disjoined melody being appropriated

* Leviticus xix. 9. † Deut. i. 17. ‡ Numbers vi. 2.

to him who, as to his essence, is separated from every creature, namely, to God.

Moreover, the interpreter of the sacred will again enunciates an opinion friendly to virtue, saying that it is not proper "to thoroughly reap every corner of the harvest field;" remembering the original proposition, according to which he agreed that "the tribute belonged to the Lord,"* to whom the authority and the conformation of these things also belong; but he who is uninitiated in reaping boasts, so far as to say, "I thought that I was with the others binding up the sheaves which I had reaped."† And he does not consider that this is the occupation of servants and of unskilful hands, as I have said a little while ago. But this word sheaves is an allegorical expression by which affairs are really meant, such as each man takes in hand for the support of his house, in which he hopes to live and dwell for ever.

V. There are, therefore, an infinite number of differences between sheaves, that is to say, between such affairs as support a house. There are also a countless host of differences between those who gather and take up the sheaves in their hand, so that it is impossible to mention or even to imagine them all. Still it is not out of place to describe a few of them by way of example, which he too mentioned, when he was recounting his dream. For he says to his brethren, "I thought that we were binding up sheaves." Now, of brethren he has ten, who are sons of the same father as himself, and one who is by the same mother; and the name of each individual among them is an emblem of some most necessary thing. Reuben is an emblem of natural acuteness, for he is called "the son who sees," being in so far as he is a son not perfect, but in so far as he is endowed with the faculty of sight and sees acutely, he is naturally well qualiefid. Simeon is an emblem of learning, for his name being interpreted means, "listening." Levi is a symbol of virtuous energies and actions, and of holy ministrations. Judas is an emblem of songs and hymns addressed to God. Issachar, of wages which are given for good works; but perhaps the works themselves are their own perfect reward. Zabulon is a symbol of light, since his name means the departure of night; and when the night departs and leaves us, then of necessity light

* *Numbers* xxxi. 28. † Genesis xxxvii. 7.

arises. Dan is a symbol of the distinction between, and division of, different things. Gad is an emblem of the invasion of pirates, and of a counter attack made upon them. Asser is a symbol of natural wealth, for his name being interpreted, signifies "a calling blessed," since wealth is accounted a blessed possession. Napthali is a symbol of peace, for all things are opened and extended by peace, as on the other hand they are closed by war; and his name being interpreted means, "widening," or "that which is opened." Benjamin is an emblem of young and old time; for being interpreted his name means "the son of days," and both young time and old time are measured by days and nights.

Accordingly, every one of them takes up in his hand what belongs to himself; and having taken it up, binds all the parts together; the man well endowed by nature taking up the parts of dexterity, and perseverance, and memory, of which good natural endowments consist; the man who has learnt well takes up the parts of listening, tranquillity, and attention; the man willing to endeavour takes up courage and a happy confidence which does not shrink from danger; the man inclined to gratitude takes up praises, panegyrics, hymns, and blessings, both in speaking and in singing; the man who is eager for wages takes up unhesitating industry, most enduring gratitude, and care, armed with a promptitude which is not to be despised; he who pursues light rather than darkness takes up wakefulness and acuteness of sight; the man who is an admirer of the division of and distinction between things takes up well-sharpened reasons so as not to be deceived by things similar to one another as if they were identical, impartiality so as not to be led away by favour, and incorruptibility; he who, in something of a piratical fashion, lays ambuscades against those who counterplot against him, takes up deceit, cajolery, trickery, sophistry, pretence, and hypocrisy, which being in their own nature blamable, are nevertheless praised when employed against an enemy; he who studies to be rich in the riches of nature takes up temperance and frugality; he who loves peace takes up obedience to law, a good reputation, freedom from pride, and equality.

VI. It is of these things, then, that the sheaves of his brethren by the same father are composed and bound up; but

the sheaf of his uterine brother is composed of days and of time, which are the causes of nothing, as if they were the causes of all things. But the dreamer and interpreter of dreams himself, for he united both characters, makes a sheaf of empty opinion as of the greatest and most brilliant of possessions and the most useful to life. For which reason it is originally by his dreams, which are things dear to night, that he is made known to the king of the bodily country, and not by any performance of conspicuous actions, which require day for their exhibition. After that, he is appointed overseer or governor of all Egypt, and is honoured with the second rank in the kingdom, and made inferior in honour only to the king. All which things are in the eye of wisdom, if that were the judge, more inglorious and more ridiculous than even defeat and dishonour. After that he puts on a golden necklace, a most illustrious halter, the circlet and wheel of interminable necessity, not the consequence and regular order of things in life, nor the connection of th eaffairs of nature as Thamar was; for her ornament was not a necklace, but an armlet. Moreover, he assumes a ring, a royal gift which is no gift, a pledge devoid of good faith, the very contrary gift to that which was given to the same Thamar by Judah the son of the seeing king, Israel; for God gives to the soul a seal, a very beautiful gift, to show that he has invested with shape the essence of all things which was previously devoid of shape, and has stamped with a particular character that which previously had no character, and has endowed with form that which had previously no distinctive form, and having perfected the entire world, he has impressed upon it an image and appearance, namely, his own word.

But Joseph also mounts the second chariot, being puffed up with elation of mind and vain arrogance. And he is regulator of the provisions, laying up and preserving the treasures for the body, and providing it with food from all quarters: and this is a very formidable fortification against the soul. Moreover, his deliberate choice of life, and the life which he admires, is testified to in no slight degree by his name; for Joseph, being interpreted, means "addition;" and vain opinion is always adding what is spurious to what is genuine, and what is the property of others to what is one's own, and what is

false to what is true, and what is superfluous to what is adequate, and luxury to what is sufficient to support existence, and pride to life.

VII. Consider now what it is which I am here desirous to prove. We are nourished by meat and drink, even though the meat be the most ordinary corn, and the drink plain water from the stream. Moreover, besides this, vain opinion has added to it an infinite number of varieties of cakes, and cheese-cakes, and sweetmeats, and costly and various mixtures of an indescribable multitude of wines, for the enjoyment of pleasure rather than for a participation in necessary food properly prepared. Again, the necessary seasonings for eating, are leeks,* and vegetables, and many fruits of trees, and cheese, and other things of that sort; and if you wish to include carnivorous men, we must, besides, add fish and meat to these items.

Would it not, then, have been sufficient to broil these things upon the coals, or to roast them at the fire, and then eat them at once, after the fashion of those true heroes of old time? But the epicure is eager not only for such things as these, but he takes vain opinion for his ally, and excites the gluttonous passions which are within him, and seeks out and hunts all about for confectioners and pastrycooks of high reputation in their art. And they, bringing forward the different baits for his miserable stomach, which have been invented after long consideration, and preparing all kinds of peculiar flavours, and arranging them in due order, tickle, and allure, and subdue the tongue.

Then, immediately they circumvent that foundation of the outward senses, the taste, by means of which the banquet-hunter in a very short time is rendered a slave instead of a free man. For who is there who does not know that clothes were originally made as a defence against the injuries which might arise to the body from cold and heat? as the poets say somewhere:—

"Taming the wind in the winter."

Who, therefore, thinks of costly purple garments? Who cares about transparent and thin summer robes? Who wishes for a garment delicate as a spider's web? Who is eager to have em-

* Numbers xi. 4.

broidered for him apparel flowered over with dyes and brocaded figures, by those who are skilful in sewing and weaving cunning embroidery, and are superior in their handiwork to the imitative skill of the painter? Who, I say? Who, but vain opinion?

VIII. And, indeed, it is for these same reasons that we had need of houses, requiring them also for protection against the attacks of wild beasts, or of men more savage in their nature than even wild beasts. Why is it, then, that we adorn the pavements and floors with costly stones? And why do we travel over Asia, and Africa, and all Europe, and the islands, searching for pillars and capitals, and architraves, and selecting them with reference to their superior beauty? And why are we anxious for, and why do we vie with one another in specimens of Doric, and Ionic, and Corinthian sculpture, and in all the refinements which luxurious men have devised in addition to the existing customs, adorning the capitals of their pillars? And why do we furnish our chambers for men and for women with golden ornaments? Is it not all from our being influenced by vain opinion? And yet, for sound sleep, the mere ground was sufficient (since, even to the present day, the accounts tell us that the gymnosophists, among the Indians, sleep on the ground in accordance with their ancient customs); and if it were not, at all events a couch made of carefully chosen stones or plain pieces of wood, would be a sufficient bed; but now the poles of our ladders are ornamented with ivory feet, and workmen inlay our beds with costly mother-of-pearl and variegated tortoise-shell, at great expense of labour, and money, and time: and some beds are even made of solid silver or solid gold, and inlaid with precious stones, with all kinds of flowery work, and embossed golden ornaments strewed about them, as if for mere display and magnificence, and not for daily use. The contriver of all which is again the same vain opinion.

Again: why need we seek for more in the way of ointment than the juice pressed out of the fruit of the olive? For that softens the limbs, and relieves the labour of the body, and produces a good condition of the flesh; and if anything has got relaxed or flabby, it binds it again, and makes it firm and solid, and it fills us with vigour and strength of muscle, no *less than any other* unguent. But the pleasant unguents of

vain opinion, are set up in opposition to those that are merely useful, on which the perfumers work, and to which vast regions contribute, such as Syria, Babylon, the Indians, and the Scythians; in which nations the origins of all perfumes are found.

IX. Again, with respect to drinking; what more could man really have need of than the cup of nature wrought with the perfection of art? Now such a cup our own hands supply, which, if any one brings together and forms into a hollow, applying them closely to his mouth, while another pours in the liquid to be drank, he gets not only a remedy for his thirst, but also a most indescribable pleasure. Still, if one were absolutely in need of something else, would not the ivy cup of the agricultural labourer be sufficient? and why should it be requisite to have recourse to the arts of other eminent artists? And what can be the use of providing a countless multitude of gold and silver goblets, if it be not for the gratification of boastful and vain-glorious arrogance, and of vain opinion raising itself to an undue height?

Again, when men wear crowns, they are not content with fragrant garlands of laurel, or ivy, or violets, or lilies, or roses, or of any tree whatever, or of any flower, neglecting all the gifts of God, which he bestows upon us at the various seasons of the year, but they put golden crowns on their heads, which are a very grievous weight, wearing them in the middle of the crowded market-place without any shame. And what can we think of such men, but that they are slaves of vain opinion, in spite of their asserting themselves not only to be free, but even to be rulers over many other persons? The day would fail me if I were to go through all the varieties of human life; and yet, why need I dwell on the subject with prolixity? For who is there who has not heard, or who has not seen, such men as these? Who is there who does not associate with, and who is not familiar with them? So that the sacred scripture has very appropriately named "addition" the enemy of simplicity and the companion of pride; for as superfluous shoots do grow on trees, which are a great injury to the genuine useful branches, and which the cultivators destroy and cut out from a prudent foreknowledge of what is necessary: so likewise the life of falsehood and arrogance often grows up by the side of the true life devoid of pride, of

which, to this day, no cultivator has been found who has been able to cut away the injurious superfluous growth by the roots.

Therefore the practisers of wisdom, knowing this in the first instance by the outward sense, and secondly, pursuing it by the mind, cry out loudly and say, "A wicked beast has seized and devoured Joseph."* But does not that most ferocious beast, the various pride which springs up in the life of men living in irregularity and confusion, whose chief workmen are covetousness and unscrupulous cunning, devour every one who comes within his reach? Therefore grief will be added to them, even while they are alive, as though they were dead, since they have a life worthy of lamentation and mourning, since Jacob mourns for Joseph, even while he is alive.

But Moses will not allow the sacred reasonings about Nadab to be bewailed; † for they have not been carried off by a savage beast, but have been taken up by unextinguishable violence and imperishable light; because, having discarded all fear and hesitation, they had duly consecrated the fervent and fiery zeal, consuming the flesh, and very easily and vehemently excited towards piety, which is unconnected with creation, but is akin to God, not going up to the altar by the regular steps, for that was forbidden by law, but proceeding rapidly onwards with a favourable gale, and being conducted up even to the threshold of heaven, becoming dissolved into ethereal beams like a whole burnt-offering.

X. Therefore, O thou soul, that art obedient to thy teacher! thou must cut off thine hand and thy power when it begins to take hold of the parts of generation; that is to say, of things created, or of human pursuits; for very often . . . . . to cut off the hand which has laid hold of the privy parts,"‡ in the first place, because it has gladly received the pleasure which it ought rather to hate; and, secondly, because it has thought that the faculty of propagating seed was in our own power, and also, because it has attributed to the creature the power which belongs to the Creator. Dost thou not see that the earthly mass, Adam, when it lays its hand upon the two trees, dies, because it has preferred the number two to the unit, and because it has admired the creature in preference to the Creator? But do thou go forth beyond the reach of the

* *Genesis xxxvii. 33.* † Leviticus x. 6. ‡ Deut. xxv. 12.

smoke and the tempest, and flee from the ridiculous pursuits of mortal life as a fearful whirlpool, and do not, as the proverb has it, touch them even with the tip of thy finger.

And when thou hast girded thyself up for the sacred ministrations, having made broad thy whole hand and thy whole power, then take a firm hold of the speculations of instruction and wisdom; for the command is of this kind, "If a soul brings a gift or a sacrifice, the gift shall be of fine wheaten flour."* After that the lawgiver adds: "And when he has taken a full handful of the fine wheaten flour, with the oil, and with all the frankincense, he places the memorial on the altar of sacrifice." Is not this a very beautiful and appropriate expression of Moses, to call that soul incorporeal which is about to offer sacrifice, but not to call the double mass which consists of mortality and immortality by any such name? For that which vows the vow—that which is full of gratitude—that which offers such sacrifices as are truly without spot, is one thing only, namely, the soul.

What then is the offering of the incorporeal soul? What is he fine wheaten flour, a symbol of the mind purified by the suggestions of instruction, which is able to render the friend of education free from all disease, and life free from all reproach? From which the priest taking a handful with his whole hand, that is to say, with the whole grasp of his mind, is commanded to offer up the whole soul itself, full of the most unalloyed and pure doctrines, as the most excellent of sacrifices, fat and in good condition, rejoicing in divine light, and redolent of the exhalations which are given forth by justice, and by the other virtues, so as always to enjoy a most fragrant, and delicious, and happy life; for the oil and the frankincense, of which the priest takes a handful with the white wheat, contain a figurative assertion of this.

XI. It is on this account that Moses set apart an especial festival for the sheaf; however, not for every sheaf, but for that which came from the sacred land. "For when," says he, "you come into the land which I give unto you, and when you reap its harvest, you shall bring sheaves as a first fruit of your harvest to the priest."† And the meaning of this injunction is, when, O mind, you come into the country of virtue,

* Leviticus ii. 1. † Leviticus xxiii. 10.

which it is fitting should be offered up to God alone, being a land good for pasture, a land of rich soil, a land which beareth fruit, and when you reap the fruit (either that afforded by the land spontaneously or that which thou hast sown), which has been brought to perfection by the God who gives perfection; carry it not home to thy house; that is to say, do not store it up, and do not attribute to thyself the cause of the crop which has arisen to thee, before thou hast offered the first fruits to the Cause of all wealth, and to him who persuaded thee to study the operations which confer riches. And it is enjoined that you shall offer the "first fruits of your own harvest;" not of the harvest of the land, in order that we may reap and gather in the harvest for ourselves; dedicating to God all good and nutritious, and beneficial fruits.

XII. But the man who is at the same time initiated in dreams and also an interpreter of dreams, is bold to say that his sheaf rose and stood upright; for in real truth, as spirited horses lift their necks high, so all who are companions of vain opinion place themselves above all things, above all cities, and laws, and national customs, and above all the circumstances which affect each individual of them. Then proceeding onwards from being demagogues to being leaders of the people, and overthrowing the things which belong to their neighbours, and setting up and establishing on a solid footing what belongs to themselves, that is to say, all such dispositions as are free and by nature impatient of slavery, they attempt to reduce these also under their power; on which account the dreamer adds, "And your sheaves turning towards my sheaf made obeisance unto it."*

For the lover of modesty marvels at and fears the stiffnecked, and the cautious person fears the self-willed man, and he who reverences holiness fears that which is impious both for himself and for others. And is not this reasonable? For inasmuch as the good man is a spectator, not only of human life but also of all the things which exist in the world, he knows how many things are accustomed to be caused by necessity, and chance, and opportunity, and violence, and authority; and what numbers of propositions, and what great instances of prosperity proceeding onwards with rapidity towards heaven, the same causes have shaken and overthrown; so that he will

* Genesis xxxvii. 7.

of necessity take up caution as a shield, as a protection to prevent his suffering any sudden and unexpected evil; for as I imagine what a wall is to a city, that caution is to an individual.

Do not these men then talk foolishly, are they not mad, who desire to display their inexperience and freedom of speech to kings and tyrants, at times daring to speak and to do things in opposition to their will? Do they not perceive that they have not only put their necks under the yoke like brute beasts, but that they have also surrendered and betrayed their whole bodies and souls likewise, and their wives and their children, and their parents, and all the rest of the numerous kindred and community of their other relations?

And it is lawful for the charioteer, and also for the passenger, with all freedom to spur, and to urge forward, and to check, and to hold back, according as he desires to arrange things, so as to make them greater or smaller. Therefore, being pricked with goads, and flogged, and mutilated, and suffering all the cruelties which can be inflicted in an inhuman and pitiless manner before death, all together, they are led away to execution and put to death.

XIII. These are the rewards of unseemly freedom of speech, not of that which is accounted such by right-thinking judges, but of that license which is full of folly, and insanity of mind, and of incurable distemper. What do you mean? Does anyone, when he sees a storm at its height, and a violent gale opposing him, and a hurricane raging tempestuously, and the sea full of vast waves, when he ought to anchor his ship, does anyone, I say, at such a moment weigh anchor and put to sea? What pilot, or what captain of a ship, was ever so drunk and intoxicated, as, while all the dangers which I have just enumerated were threatening him, to be willing to set sail, lest, if his vessel became water-logged by the sea breaking over it from above, it might be swallowed up with all its crew? For, if he had been inclined to meet with a voyage free from danger, it was in his power to wait for calm weather and a smooth and favourable breeze. What would one say, suppose anyone were to see a bear or a lion coming on with violence, and, while he might pacify and tame him, were to provoke him and make him savage, in order to give up himself as an unpitied meal and feast to those ravenous monsters? Unless indeed anyone

will assert that it is of no use to anyone to oppose the asps and serpents of Egypt, and all the other things which . . . destructive poison . . . inflict inevitable death on those who are once bitten by them; for that men must be content to use incantations, and so to tame those beasts, and by such means to avoid suffering any evil from them.

Moreover, are there not certain men who are more savage and more treacherous than boars, or serpents, or asps? whose treacherous and malignant disposition it is impossible to escape otherwise than by gentleness and caresses? Therefore the wise Abraham will offer adoration to the sons of Cheth, and their name being interpreted, means "admiring," because the occasion persuades him to do so. For he has not come to this action of adoration because he honours persons who, by nature, and by hereditary qualities, and by their own habits, are enemies to reason, and who miserably waste that coinage of the soul, namely instruction, corrupting, and adulterating, and clipping it, but because he fears their present power and their scarcely conquerable strength, and is on his guard not to provoke them. he takes refuge in that great and powerful possession and weapon of virtue, that most excellent place of abode for wise souls, the double cave, which he could not occupy while warring and fighting, but only by acting as a champion and servant of reason.

What? Do not we also, when we are spending our time in the market-place, frequently wonder at the masters, and also at the beasts of burden? But we wonder at these two classes, with different and not the same feelings. For we look upon the masters with honour, and upon the beasts of burden with fear, lest some injury should be done to us by them. And when an opportunity offers, it is a good thing to attack our enemies and put down their power; but when we have no such opportunity, it is better to be quiet; but if we wish to find perfect safety as far as they are concerned, it is advantageous to caress them.

XIV. On which account it is even now proper to praise those persons who do not yield to the president of vain opinion but who withstand him and say, "Shall you be a king and rule over us?"* For they do not as yet see him actually in possession of kingly power, they do not see him as yet kindled

* Genesis xxxvii. 8.

like a flame, and shining and blazing in the unlimited fuel, but only smouldering like a spark, dreaming of glory, and not visibly having attained to it; for they also suggest favourable hopes to themselves as if they will not be able to be overcome by him; for which reason they say, "Shall you reign over us?" Which is equivalent to saying, Do you expect to be a king over us while we are living, existing, strong, and breathing? Perhaps, indeed, you may make yourself master of such as are weak people, but with respect to us who are strong you will be looked upon by us as a subject.

And, indeed, this is the natural state of the case. For when right reason is powerful in the soul, vain opinion is put down; but when right reason is weak, vain opinion is strong. As long, therefore, as the soul has its own power still safe, and as long as it is not mutilated in any part of it, it may well have confidence to attack and aim its arrows at the pride which resists it, and it may indulge in freedom of speech, saying, "You shall not be a king, you shall not be a lord either over us, or during our lifetime over others; but we, with our body-guards and shield-bearers, the offspring of wisdom, will overthrow your attacks and baffle your threats with one single sally of ours. In reference to which circumstances it is said, "They began to hate him because of his dreams and because of his words."

But are not all the images which pride sets up and worships mere words and dreams, while, on the contrary, those things alone deserve to be called actions and real energies which are referable to correct life and right reason? And the one class are worthy of hatred as being false, and the other class deserve friendship as being full of desirable and lovely truth. Let no one, therefore, venture to bring accusations against the virtues of such men, as if they exhibited a specimen of an inhuman and unbrotherly disposition; but let any one who is disposed to do so, learn that it is not a man who is now being judged of, but the disposition which exists in the soul of each individual, which is mad on the subject of glory and arrogant pride; let him embrace these men who have adopted irreconcileable enmity and hatred towards this disposition, and let him never love what is hated by them. Knowing thoroughly that such judges are never deceived so as to wander from a sound opinion, but that, having learnt from the beginning to understand

who is the true king, namely, the Lord, they indignantly refuse to worship him who deprives God of his honour, and seeks to appropriate it to himself, and who invites his fellow servants to do him service.

XV. On which account they say with confidence, "Shall you be a king and reign over us?" Are you ignorant that we are not independent, but that we are under the government of an immortal king, the only God? And why should you be a lord and lord it over us? for are we not under domination, and have we not now, and shall we not have for ever, and ever the same one Lord? in being whose servants we rejoice more than any one else can do in his liberty; for to be the servant of God is the most excellent of all things which are honoured in creation.

* * * * * *

I, therefore, should pray that I myself also might be able to abide firmly in the things which have been decided by these men; for they are accurate investigators, and superintendents, and overseers of things, not of bodies, and just, and sober all their lives, so as never to be deceived by any of those things which are accustomed to deceive mankind. But up to this time I am in a state of intoxication, and I am labouring under much uncertainty, and I have need of a staff and of a guide like a blind man; for if I had a staff to support me, then, perhaps, I might neither stumble nor fall.

But if any persons who are conscious that they are but inconsiderate and precipitate, pay no attention to and do not care to follow those who have investigated all necessary matters with diligence and circumspection, nor, though they themselves are ignorant of the road, submit to the guidance of those who are acquainted with it, let them know that they have entered a course which it is very difficult to travel through, and that they are entangled in it, and will not be able to advance further; but I am am so bound by treaties to these men, the moment I have a little recovered from my intoxication, that I think the same person both a friend and an enemy.

But at present I will drive from me and hate that dreamer no less than they do; for no one in his senses could blame me for this, that the majority of opinions and votes does always prevail; but when he changes to a better course of life, and no longer dreams, and no longer worries himself by entangling

himself in the vain imaginations of the slaves of vain opinion, and when he no longer dreams about night, and darkness, and the changes of uncertain matters which cannot be guessed at; he, then, having awakened from deep sleep, continues awake and receives certainty instead of indistinctness, and truth instead of false conceptions, and day instead of night, and light instead of darkness, and rejects an Egyptian wife, that is to say, the pleasure of the body, when she invites him to come in to her, and to enjoy her conversation, out of an indescribable love of continence and admiration for piety, and asserts his right to a share in those kindred and inherited blessings from which he appeared to be alienated, again desiring to recover that portion of virtue which properly belongs to him.

For proceeding by small and gradual improvements, as if he were now established on the summit and perfection of his own life, he cries out, what indeed he knows to a certainty from what has happened to him, that he "belongs to God,"* and that he belongs no more to any object of external sense which can affect any creature; and then his brethren will come to a permanent reconciliation with him, changing their hatred into friendship, and their malignity into good will.

But I who am the follower of these men, for I have learnt to obey them as a servant obeys his master, will never cease to praise him for his change of mind. Since Moses, also, that priest of sacred things, preserves his change of mind as what is worthy of love and of being preserved in men's recollection, from being forgotten, by the symbol of the bones* which he did not think proper to have buried in Egypt for ever, looking upon it as a hard thing, if the soul put forth any beautiful flower to suffer that to wither away, and to be overwhelmed and destroyed by the torrents which the Egyptian river of the passions, namely the body, which is incessantly flowing through all the outward senses, sends forth.

XVI. The vision, therefore, which appeared proceeding from the earth, with reference to the sheaves and the interpretation thereof, has now been sufficiently discussed. It is time now to consider the other vision; and to examine how that is interpreted by the art of the explanation of dreams. "He saw then," says the scripture, "a second dream, and he related it to his father, and to his brethren, and he said, I saw

* Genesis l. 19. † Exodus xiii. 19.

that the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars worshipped me. And his father rebuked him, and said, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren, come forward and advance, and fall down to the earth and worship thee? And his brethren were jealous of him; but his father regarded his words."*

The studiers of sublime wisdom now say that the zodiac, the greatest of all the circles in heaven, is studded with twelve animals (ζώδια), from which it has derived its name. And that the sun and the moon are always revolving around it, and go through each of the animals, not indeed with equal rapidity, but in unequal numbers and periods; the one doing so in thirty days, and the other in as near as may be a twelfth part of that time, that is in two days and a half; therefore, he who saw this heaven-sent vision, thought that he was being worshipped by eleven stars, ranking himself among them as the twelfth, so as to complete the whole circle of the zodiac.

And I recollect having before now heard some man who had applied himself to learning in no careless or indolent spirit, say that men were not the only beings which went mad with vain opinions, but that the stars did so too. And they also, said he, contend with one another for precedence, and those which are the greater claim to be attended by the lesser stars as their guards; these matters, however, we may leave for the studiers of sublime subjects to investigate, and to settle how much truth and how much random assertion there is in them.

But we say, that the lover of indiscriminate study, and unreasonable contention, and vain opinion, being always puffed up by folly, wishes to assert a precedence, not only over men, but also above the nature of all existing things; and he thinks that all things were created for his sake, and that it is necessary that everything, whether earth or heaven, or water or air, should bring him tribute; and he has gone to such an extravagant pitch of folly, that he is not able to reason upon such matters as even a young child might understand, and to see that no artist ever makes the whole for the sake of the part, but rather makes the part for the sake of the whole. Now the part of the whole is the man, so that he is properly asserted to

* Genesis xxxvii. 9.

have been made for the sake of perfecting the world in which he is rightly classed.

XVII. But some persons are full of such exceeding folly, that they are indignant if the whole world does not follow their intentions: for this reason Xerxes, the king of Persia, being desirous to strike terror into his enemies, made a display of very mighty undertakings, altering the whole face of nature; for he changed the nature of the elements of the earth and of the sea, giving land to the sea and sea to the land, by joining the Hellespont with a bridge, and breaking up Mount Athos into deep gulfs, which, being filled with sea, became so many new and artificially-cut seas, being entirely changed from the ancient course of nature. And having worked wonders with respect to the earth, according to his wishes, he mounted up upon daring conceptions, like a miserable man as he was, contracting the guilt of impiety, and seeking to soar up to heaven, as if he would move what cannot be moved, and would subjugate the host of heaven, and, as the proverb has it, he began with a sacred thing.

For he aimed his arrows at the most excellent of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the ruler of the day, as if he had not himself been wounded by the invisible dart of insanity, not only because of his desiring things which were impossible, but such as were also most impious, either of which is a great disgrace to him who attempts them.

It is related, also, that the very populous nation of the Germans, and theirs is a country where the sea is subject to the ebb and flow of the tide, ran down to the reflux which occurs in their country with great impetuosity, and drawing their naked swords charged and encountered the billowy sea as if it were a phalanx of enemies: and these men deserve to be hated because they dare impiously to take up the arms of enemies against the free and invincible parts of nature; but they deserve also to be ridiculed for attempting what is impossible, as if they thought it practicable to wound the water as though it were a living animal, or to stab it and kill it. And again, one should grieve at the sight of such men, and fear, and flee out of fear at their attacks, and submit to all the affections of the soul which are conversant with pleasures and pains.

XVIII. Moreover, it is only a very short time ago that

I knew a man of very high rank, one who was prefect and governor of Egypt, who, after he had taken it into his head to change our national institutions and customs, and in an extraordinary manner to abrogate that most holy law guarded by such fearful penalties, which relates to the seventh day, and was compelling us to obey him, and to do other things contrary to our established custom, thinking that that would be the beginning of our departure from the other laws, and of our violation of all our national customs, if he were once able to destroy our hereditary and customary observance of the seventh day. And as he saw that those to whom he offered violence did not yield to his injunctions, and that the rest of our people was not disposed to submit in tranquillity, but was indignant and furious at the business, and was mourning and dispirited as if at the enslaving, and overthrow, and utter destruction of their country; he thought fit to endeavour by a speech to persuade them to transgress, saying: "If an invasion of enemies were to come upon you on a sudden, or the violence of a deluge, from the river having broken down all its barriers by an inundation, or any terrible fire, or a thunderbolt, or famine, or pestilence, or an earthquake, or any other evil, whether caused by men or inflicted by God, would you still remain quiet and unmoved at home? And would you still go on in your habitual fashion, keeping your right hand back, and holding the other under your garments close to your sides, in order that you might not, even without meaning it, do anything to contribute to your own preservation? And would you still sit down in your synagogues, collecting your ordinary assemblies, and reading your sacred volumes in security, and explaining whatever is not quite clear, and devoting all your time and leisure with long discussions to the philosophy of your ancestors? Nay: rather shaking off all these ideas, you would gird yourselves up for the preservation of yourselves, and of your parents, and of your children, and, if one must tell the plain truth, of your possessions and treasures, to save them from being utterly destroyed. And, indeed, I myself, am," said he, "all the evils which I have just enumerated: I am a whirlwind, I am war, and deluge, and thunderbolt, and the calamity of famine, and the misery of pestilence, and an earthquake which shakes and overthrows what stood firm before, not being merely the

name of a necessity of fate, but actual, visible power, standing close to you."

What then can we say that a man who says, or who merely thinks such things as these, is? Is he not an evil of an extraordinary nature? He surely must be some foreign calamity, brought from over the sea, or from some other world, since he, a man in every respect miserable, has dared to compare himself to the all-blessed God. We must likewise add, that he is daring here to utter blasphemies against the sun, and the moon, and the rest of the stars, whenever anything which had been looked for according to the seasons of the year, either does not happen at all, or is brought about with difficulty; if, for instance, the summer causes too much heat, or the winter too excessive a cold, or if the spring or autumn were unseasonable, so that the one were to become barren and unfruitful, and the other to be prolific only in diseases.

Therefore, giving all imaginable license to an unbridled mouth and abusive tongue, such a man will reproach the stars as not bringing their customary tribute, all but claiming for the things of earth the reverence and adoration of the heavenly bodies, and for himself above them all, in proportion as he, as being a man, looks upon himself as superior to the other animals.

XIX. Such men then are classed by us as the very teachers of vain opinion. Let us now in turn look at their followers by themselves. These men are always laying plots against the practisers of virtue, and when they see them labouring to make their own life pure with guileless truth, and to exhibit it, as one may say, to the light of the moon, or of the sun, as able to stand inspection, they endeavour by deceit, or even by open violence, to hinder them, trying to drive them into the sunless country of impious men, which is occupied by deep night, and endless darkness, and ten thousand tribes of images, and appearances, and dreams, and then, having thrust them down thither, they compel them to fall down and worship them as masters.

For we look upon the practiser of virtue as the sun, since the one gives light to our bodies, and the other to the things which belong to the soul: and the education which such a man uses we look upon as the moon, for the use of each is

most pure and most useful in the night; and the brethren are those virtuous reasonings which are the offspring of instruction, and of a soul devoted to the practice of virtue, all of which make straight the right path of life, and which they, therefore, by all kinds of wary and cunning wrestlings, seek to overcome, and to trip up, and overthrow, and break the neck of, because they have determined neither to think nor to say anything sound themselves.

For this reason his father rebukes this intractable youth (I do not mean Jacob, but right reason, which is older even than he), saying, "What is this dream which thou hast dreamt?" but thou hast not seen any dream at all; hast thou fancied that things which are free by nature are to be of necessity slaves to human things, and that things which are rulers are to become subjects? and, what is more paradoxical still, subject, not to anything else but to the very things which they govern? and to be the slaves of no other things except those very things which are their own slaves? unless indeed a change of all established things to their direct contraries is to take place, by the power of God, who is able to effect all things, and to move what is immovable, and to fix what is in a constant state of agitation.

Since on what principle can you be angry with or reproach a man who sees a vision in his sleep? For he will say, I did not see it intentionally, why do you bring accusations against me, for errors which I have not committed from any deliberate purpose? I have related to you what fell upon me and made an impression on my mind suddenly, and without my desiring it. But the present question is not about dreams, but about things which resemble dreams; which, to those whose minds are not highly purified appear great, and beautiful, and desirable things; while they are, in reality, trifling, and obscure, and deserving of ridicule, in the eyes of honest judges of the truth.

XX. Shall I then, says he, I, that is to say, right reason, come to you? And shall the soul, which is both the mother and nurse of the company devoted to learning virtuous instruction, also come to thee? And are the offspring of us too to come likewise? And are we all to stand in a row, laying aside all our former dignity, and holding up our hands and *praying to thee?* And are we then to prostrate ourselves on

the ground, and endeavour to propitiate and adore thee? But may the sun never shine upon such transactions; since deep darkness is suited to evil deeds, and brilliant light to good deeds.

And what could be a greater evil than for pride, that deceiver and beguiler, to be praised and admired, instead of sincere and honest simplicity? And it is with great propriety that the statement is added, "And his father took notice of his words." For it is the occupation of a soul which is not young, nor barren, nor wholly unfruitful, but rather of one which is really older and able to beget offspring, to cohabit with prudent caution, and to despise and overlook nothing whatever, but to have a reverential fear of the power of God, from which we cannot escape, and which we cannot overcome; and to look all round to see what its very end shall be.

For this reason they say, that the sister of Moses also (and she is called Hope by us, when speaking in a figurative manner) was contemplated at a distance by the sacred scriptures, inasmuch as she kept her eyes fixed on the end of life, hoping that some good fortune might befall her, sent by the Giver of all good from above, from heaven; for it has often happened that many persons, after having taken long voyages, and having sailed over a great expanse of sea with a fair wind, and without any danger, have suddenly been shipwrecked in the harbour itself, when they have been on the very point of casting anchor; and many persons too, who have successfully come to the end of formidable wars of long duration, and have come off unwounded so as never to have received even a scratch on the surface of the skin, but to have escaped whole and entire as if they had only been at some popular assembly or national festival, having returned home with joy and cheerfulness, have been plotted against in their houses by those who, of all the world, least ought to have done so; being, as the proverb says, like oxen slain in their stall.

XXI. As these unexpected events, which no one could ever have anticipated, do frequently happen in this manner and overthrow people, so also do they often drive the powers of the soul in a contrary direction to the proper one, and drag it in an opposite way, according to their power, and compel it to change its course: for what man, who has ever descended into the arena of life, has come off without a fall? And who is there who has

never been tripped up in that contest? He is happy who has not often been so. And for whom has not fortune laid snares, blowing upon him at intervals, and collecting its strength, that it may twine itself around him, and speedily carry him off before its adversary is ready for the contest? Do we not know, that some persons have come from infancy to old age who have never been sensible of any irregularity, whether it be from the happy condition of their nature, or from the care of those who brought them up and educated them, or owing to both circumstances? But then, being filled with profound peace in themselves, which is real peace, and the archetypal model of that which exists in cities, and being considered happy on that account, because they have never had a notion, not even in a dream, of the intestine war which arises from the violence of the passions, and which is the most piteous of all wars, have at last, at the very close of their lives, run on shore and made shipwreck, either through some intemperance of language or some insatiable gluttony, or some incontinent licentiousness of the parts below the belly. For some, while—

"Still on the threshold of extreme old age,"

Have admired the youthful, unhonoured, detestable, and disgraceful life of debauchees; and others have given in to the cunning, and wicked, and calumnious, and desperate way of life of others, pursuing the first fruits of a quarrelsome curiosity, when they ought rather to have discarded such habits now, even if they had been familiar to them.

For which reason one ought to propitiate God, and to supplicate him perseveringly, that he will not pass by our miserable race, but that he will allow his saving mercy to be everlastingly shown towards us; for it is difficult for those who have tasted unalloyed peace to be prevented from glutting themselves with it.

XXII. But, come now, this hunger is a lighter evil than thirst, inasmuch as it has love and desire for its comforters; but when, through the desire of drinking, it is necessary to to satisfy one's self with that other fountain, the water of which is dirty and unwholesome, then it is indispensable for the drinkers, being filled with a bitter-sweet pleasure, to live an unenviable life, betaking themselves to pernicious things *as though they* were advantageous, from ignorance of what is

really desirable. But the impetuous course of these evils is most grievous when the irrational powers of the soul attack the powers of the reason and get the better of them; for as long as the herds of oxen obey their drivers, and the flocks obey their shepherds, and the goats obey the goatherds, the herds and all belonging to them go on well; but when the herdsmen who are appointed to look after the cattle become weaker than the beasts committed to their care, then everything goes wrong, and instead of regularity there arises irregularity, and disorder in the place of order, and confusion instead of steadiness, and disturbance in the place of good arrangement, since there is no longer any lawful superintending power properly established; for if there had been such a thing, it would have been destroyed before this time.

What then? Do we not think that even in ourselves there is a herd of irrational cattle, inasmuch as the irrational multitude of the soul is deprived of reason, and that the shepherd is the governing mind? But as long as that is vigorous and competent to act as the manager of the herd, everything goes on in a just, and prosperous, and advantageous manner; but when any weakness or want of power supervenes to the king, then it follows of necessity that the subjects also labour with a like infirmity; and when they most completely seem to be in enjoyment of liberty, then they are a prize, lying most entirely ready for any one who pleases to contend for it to seize; for the natural course is for anarchy to be treacherous, and for government to be salutary, especially in a state where law and justice are honoured. And this is such a state as is consistent with reason.

XXIII. We have now, then, spoken with sufficient accuracy about the dreams of vain opinion. Now, the different species of gluttony are conversant about drinking and eating. But the one has no need of any great variety, while the other requires a countless number of seasonings and sauces. These things, then, are referred to two managers. The matters relating to excessive drinking are referred to the chief butler, and those which belong to luxurious eating to the chief baker. Now these men are, with excessive propriety, recorded to have seen visions of dreams in one night; for they, each of them, labour to gratify the same need of their master, providing not simple food, but such as is accompanied with pleasure and

extraordinary gratification; and each of them, separately, labours about half the food, but the two together are employed about the whole, and the one part draws on the other; for men when, they have eaten, immediately desire drink; and men who have drunk immediately wish to eat; so that it is in no slight degree on this account that a vision is ascribed to them both at the same time. Therefore the chief butler has the office of ministering to the appetite for wine, and the chief baker to the voracity.

And each of them sees in his vision what relates to his own business: the one sees wine and the plant which engenders wine, namely the vine; the other sees white bread lying on dishes, and himself serving up the dishes.*

Now perhaps it may be proper first of all to examine the first dream. And it is as follows:—"In my sleep there was a vine before me; and on the vine were three branches, and it flourished and brought forth shoots, and there were on it ripe bunches of grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the bunch of grapes and pressed it into the cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."† He speaks here in an admirable manner, and the expression, "in my sleep," is quite correct. For, in real truth, he who follows not so much the inebriety which arises from wine as that which proceeds from folly, being indignant at an upright and wakeful position, like people asleep, is thrown down and relaxed, and shuts the eyes of his soul, not being able either to see or to hear anything which is worthy of being seen or of being heard. And being overthrown, he goes on a blind and guideless (I will not say path, but pathless) way through life, being pricked with thorns and briars; and sometimes too he falls down steep places, and tumbles down upon other people, so as to hurt both them and himself in a pitiable manner. But the deep and long-enduring sleep in which every wicked man is held, removes all true conceptions, and fills the mind with all kinds of false images, and unsubstantial visions, persuading it to embrace what is shameful as praiseworthy. For at one time it dreams of grief as joy, and does not perceive that it is looking at the vine, the plant of folly and error. "For," says the chief butler, "the vine was before me," the desired object was before him who desired it, wickedness was before the wicked man: which we, foolish men

* *Genesis* xl. 16. † Genesis xl. 9.

that we are, cultivate, without being aware that we are doing so to our own injury, the fruit of which we eat and drink, classing it under both species of food, which, as it would seem, we appropriate, not for one half the evils that affect us for the whole of our complete and entire misfortunes.

XXIV. But it is desirable not to be ignorant that the intoxication which proceeds from the vine does not affect all who indulge in it in a similar manner, but very often affects different people in contrary ways, so that it makes some better and others worse than they are naturally. For in the case of some men, it relaxes the sternness and moroseness of their character, and relieves them of their cares, and assuages their anger and their sorrow, and brings their dispositions into a milder mood, and makes their souls placable. But of others again, it cherishes the angry passions, and binds their pains firmly, and excites their feelings of love, and stimulates their rudeness; rendering their mouth talkative, their tongue unbridled, emancipating their external senses from all restraint, rendering their passions furious, and their whole mind violent and excited towards every object.

So that the condition of the men first-mentioned appears to resemble an untroubled calm in fine weather, or a waveless tranquillity at sea, or a most peaceful and steady state of affairs in a city. But the condition of those whom I have last described, is more like a violent and unremitting gale, or a sea tossed by a storm into vast billows, or a sedition, an evil more fearful than even interminable and irreconcileable war.

Therefore of these two banquet parties, the one is filled with laughter, with men promising amusement, and hoping for good fortune, and enjoying cheerfulness, and pleasant language, and mirth, and joy, and freedom from anxiety; but the other is full of melancholy, and seriousness, and downcast looks, and offences, and reproaches, and wounds; of men gnashing their teeth, looking fiercely at one another, barking, strangling one another, contending with one another in every conceivable way, mutilating one another's ears and noses, and whatever parts of the body they can reach, displaying the intoxication of their whole life and their drunkenness in this unholy contest, with every kind of unseemly behaviour.

XXV. It would therefore be naturally consistent to consider next that the vine is the symbol of two things: of folly, and of

mirth. And each of these two, though it is indicated by many circumstances, we will explain in a few words, to avoid prolixity. When any one leading us along the road, deserted by the passions and by acts of wickedness, the road, that is, of philosophy, has led right reason to a height, and placed it like a scout upon a watch-tower,* and has commanded it to look around, and to survey the whole country of virtue, and to see whether it be blessed with a deep soil, and rich, and productive of herbage and of fruit, since deep soil is good to cause the learning which has been sown in it to increase, and to make the doctrines which have been planted in it, and which have grown to trees, to form solid trunks, or whether it be of a contrary character; and also to examine into actions, as one might into cities, and see whether they are strongly fortified, or whether they are defenceless and deprived of all the security which might be afforded by walls around them.

Also to inquire into the condition of the inhabitants, whether they are considerable in numbers and in valour, or whether their courage is weak and their numbers scanty, the two causes acting reciprocally on one another. Then because we were not able to bear the weight of the whole trunk of wisdom, we cut off one branch and one bunch of grapes, and carried it with us as a most undeniable proof of our joy, and a burden very easy to be borne, wishing to display at the same time the branch and the fruit of excellence to those who are gifted with acuteness of mental sight, to show them, that is, the strongly-shooting and grape-bearing vine.

XXVI. They then very fairly compare this vine of which we were only able to take a part, to happiness. And one of the ancient prophets bears his testimony in favour of my view of the matter, who speaking under divine inspiration has said, "The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel."† Now Israel is the mind inclined to the contemplation of God and of the world; for the name Israel is interpreted, "seeing God," and the abode of the mind is the whole soul; and this is the most sacred vineyard, bearing as its fruit the divine shoot, virtue: thus thinking well (τὸ εὖ φρονεῖν) is the derivation of the word joy (εὐφροσύνη), being a great and brilliant thing so that, says Moses, even God himself does not disdain to exhibit it; and most especially at that time when the

* Numbers xiii. 18. † Isaiah v. 7.

human race is departing from its sins, and inclining and bending its steps towards justice, following of its own accord the laws and institutions of nature.

"For," says Moses, "the Lord thy God will return, that he may rejoice in thee for thy good as he rejoiced in thy fathers, if thou wilt hear his voice to keep all his commandments and his ordinances and his judgments which are written in the book of this law."* Who could implant in man a desire for virtue and excellence, more strongly than is here done? Dost thou wish, says the scripture, O mind, that God should rejoice? Do thou rejoice in virtue thyself, and bring no costly offering, (for what need has God of anything of thine?) But, on the other hand, receive with joy all the good things which he bestows upon thee; for he rejoices in giving, when they who receive are worthy of his grace; unless you think that those men who live blameably may be justly said to make God indignant and to excite his anger, but that those who live in a praiseworthy manner do not make him rejoice.

But there is nothing which gives so much pleasure to fathers and mothers, our mortal parents, as the virtues of their children, even though they may be in want of numbers of necessary things; And does not the excellence of these aforesaid persons in like manner rejoice the Creator of the universe, who is in no want of anything whatever? Do thou therefore, O mind, having learnt how mighty a thing the anger of God is, and how great a good the joy of God is, do not do anything worthy to excite his anger to thy own destruction, but study only such things as may be the means of your pleasing God. And you will find these actions to be not the making of long and unusual journeys, nor the passing over unnavigable seas, or wandering without stopping to take breath to the furthest boundaries of earth and sea: for good actions do not dwell at a distance and have not been banished beyond the confines of the habitable world, but, as Moses says, good is situated near you, and is planted along with you, being united to you in three necessary parts, in the heart, in the mouth, and in the hands: that is to say, in the mind, in the speech, and in the actions; since it is necessary to think and to say, and to do good things, which are made perfect by a union of good design, good execution, and good language.

* Deuteronomy xxx. 9.

XXVII. I say therefore to him whose occupation is to gratify one description of gluttony, the fondness for drinking, namely to the chief butler, "Why are you labouring hard, O unhappy man? For you think that you are preparing pleasant things to give delight, but in reality you are kindling a flame of folly and intemperance, and contributing great and abundant quantities of fuel to it." But perhaps he may reply, do not blame me precipitately before you have considered my case; I was appointed to pour out wine, not indeed for a man who was endowed with temperance, and piety, and all the other virtues, but for a violent, and intemperate, and unjust master, one who was very proud in his impiety, and who dared once to say, "I do not know the Lord;"* so that I very naturally studied what would afford him gratification: and do not wonder that God is delighted with one thing, and the mind which is hostile to God, namely Pharaoh, with the contrary.

Who then is the chief butler of God? The priest who offers libations to him, the truly great high priest, who, having received a draught of everlasting graces, offers himself in return, pouring in an entire libation full of unmixed wine.

You see that there are differences between butlers in proportion to the differences existing between those whom they are waiting on; on this account I, the butler of Pharaoh, who exerts his stiff-necked, and in all respects intemperate reason, in the direction of indulgences of his passions, am a eunuch, having had all the generative parts of my soul removed, and being compelled to migrate from the apartments of the men, and am a fugitive also from the women's chambers, inasmuch as I am neither male nor female; nor am I able to disseminate seed nor to receive it, being of an ambiguous nature, neither one thing nor the other; a mere false coin o human money, destitute of immortality, which is from time to time kept alive by the constant succession of children and offspring: being also excluded from the assembly and sacred meeting of the people, for it is expressly forbidden that any one who has suffered any injury or mutilation such as I have should enter in thereto.†

XXVIII. But the high priest of whom we are speaking is a perfect man, the husband of a virgin (a most extraordinary

* *Exodus v. 2.* † Deuteronomy xxiii. 1.

statement), who has never been made a woman; but who on the contrary, has ceased to be influenced by the customs of women in regard to her connection with her husband.* And not only is this man competent to sow the seeds of unpolluted and virgin opinions, but he is also the father of sacred reasonings, some of which are overseers and superintendents of the affairs of nature, such as Eleazar and Ithamar; others are ministers of the worship of God, earnestly occupied in kindling and burning up the flame of heaven; for, as they are always uttering discourses relating to holiness, they cause it to shine, bringing forth the most divine kind of piety like fire from a flint; and the being who is at the same time the guide and father of those men is no insignificant part of the sacred assembly, but he is rather the person without whom the duly convened assembly of the parts of the soul could never be collected together at all; he is the president, the chairman, the creator of it, who, without the aid of any other being, is able by himself alone to consider and to do everything.

He, when taken in conjunction with others, is insignificant in point of number, but when he is looked at by himself he becomes numerous; he is a tribunal, an entire council, the whole people, a complete multitude, the entire race of mankind, or rather, if one is to speak the real truth, he is a sort of nature bordering on God, inferior indeed to him, but superior to man; "for when," the scripture says, "the high priest goes into the Holy of Holies he will not be a man."† What then will he be if he is not a man? Will he be God? I would not venture to say that (for the chief prophet, Moses, did receive the inheritance of this name while he was still in Egypt, being called "the god of Pharaoh;")‡ nor again is he man, but he touches both these extremities as if he touched both the feet and the head.

XXIX. So now one kind of vine, which has been assigned as the portion of cheerfulness, and the intoxication which arises from it, namely unmingled goodness of counsel, and the cup-bearer too who drew the wine from the divine goblet, which God himself has filled with virtues up to the lip, has been explained; but the other kind, that of folly, and grief, and drunkenness, is also already depicted in a fashion but in another character, by other expressions which are used in the

Genesis xviii. 11. † Leviticus xvi. 17. ‡ Exodus vii. 1.

greater canticle; "for," says the scripture, "their vine is of the vine of Sodom and their tendrils are of the vine of Gomorrah; their grapes are the grapes of gall; their bunches are full of bitterness itself. Their wine is the madness of dragons and the incurable fury of asps."*

You see here what great effects are produced by the drunkenness of folly: bitterness, an evil disposition, exceeding gall, excessive anger, implacability, a biting and treacherous disposition. The lawgiver most emphatically asserts the branch of the vine of folly to be in Sodom; and the name Sodom, being interpreted, means "blindness," or "barrenness;" since folly is a thing which is blind, and also barren of all good things; though, nevertheless, some people have been so greatly influenced by it as to measure, and weigh, and count everything with reference to themselves alone.

Gomorrah, being interpreted, means "measure;" but Moses conceived that God was the standard of weight, and measure, and number, in the universe, but he had not the same opinion of the human mind. And he shows this in the following passage, where he says, "There shall not be in thy sack one weight, and another weight, a great and a small; there shall not be in thy house one measure, and another measure, a great and a small; thy weight shall be a true and just one." But a true and just measure is, to conceive that it is the only just God alone who measures and weighs everything, and who has circumscribed the nature of the universe with numbers, and limitations, and boundaries. But it is unjust and false to imagine that these things are regulated in accordance with the human mind. But the eunuch and chief butler of Pharaoh, having beheld the plant generative of folly, namely, the vine, adds besides to his delineation there stocks, that he may signify the three extremities of error according to the three different times; for a root is equivalent to extremity.

XXX. When, therefore, folly has overshadowed and occupied the whole soul, and when it has left no portion of it unoccupied or free, it not only compels it to commit such errors as are remediable, but such also as are irremediable. Now those which admit of a remedy are set down as the easiest and the first; but those which are irremediable are altogether terrible, and are the last of all, being so far analo-

* *Deuteronomy* xxxii. 32. † Deuteronomy xxv. 13.

gous to roots. And as, in my notions, wisdom begins to benefit a man in small matters, and ends at last in the absolute perfection of all well-doing, so, in the same manner folly, constraining the soul from above and leading it away from instruction by small degrees, establishes it at last at a long distance from right reason, and finally leads it to the extreme point, and utterly overthrows it.

And the dream showed that after the roots appeared the vine flourished and put forth shoots and bore fruit; for, says the chief butler, "It was flourishing and bearing shoots, around which were bunches of grapes."* The foolish man is accustomed to display barrenness, and never to put forth even leaves, and, in fact, to be withered all his life; for what could be a greater evil than folly flourishing and bearing fruit? But, says he, "the cup of Pharaoh," the vessel which is the receptacle of folly and drunkenness, and of the ceaseless intoxication of life, "is in my hand;" an expression equivalent to saying, depends upon my administration, and endeavours, and powers; for without my contrivances, the passion will not proceed rightly by its own efforts; for as it is proper that the reins should be in the hands of the charioteer, and the rudder in the hands of the pilot—for this is the only way in which the course of the chariot and the voyage of the vessel can proceed successfully—so, also, the filling of the goblet with wine is in the hands and depends upon the power of him who by his art brings to perfection one of the two kinds of gluttony, namely, satiety of wine.

But why has he endured to boast in respect of a matter which deserved rather to be denied than to be confessed? Would it not have been better not to have confessed at all that he was a teacher of intemperance, and not to admit that he increased the excitement of the passions by wine in the case of the intemperate man, as being an inventor and producer of a luxurious, and debauched, and most disgraceful way of life. Such, however, is the case. Folly boasts of those things which ought to be concealed; and in this present case it prides itself, not only on holding in its hands the receptacle of the intemperate soul, that is to say, the cup of wine, and in showing it to all men, but also in pressing out the grapes

* Genesis xl. 10.

into it; that is to say, in making that which satisfies the passion, and bringing what is concealed to light.

For as children which require food, when they are about to receive the milk, squeeze and press out the breast of the nurse that feeds them, so likewise does the workman and cause of intemperance vigorously press the fountain from which the evil of abundance of wine pours forth, that he may derive food in a most agreeable manner from the drops which are squeezed out.

XXXI. Such a description then as I have here given may be applied to the man who is made frantic by the influence of unmixed wines, that he is a drunken, and foolish, and irremediable evil. We must now, in turn, investigate the character of the glutton, who is akin to the drunkard, and who is a sworn companion of all kinds of voracity and greediness, labouring, without any restraint, at the artificial gratification of his appetite. And yet it does not require a great deal of care to arrive at his true character; for the dream which was seen is a representation of his likeness very closely resembling him: and when we have accurately examined him, let us look upon him as we would upon a representation in a mirror; for "I thought," said the chief cook, "that I had three baskets of fine wheaten loaves upon my head." Now, using the word "head" in an allegorical manner, we mean by it the dominant part of the soul, that is, the mind, and we say that everything rests or depends upon that; for he once exclaimed concerning it, "All these things were in my charge." Therefore when he had completed the preparation of these things which he had devised against the miserable belly, he displayed himself also, and, like a foolish man as he was, he was not ashamed to be weighed down with so great a burden, namely, the weight of three baskets; that is to say, with three portions of time.

For those who advocate the cause of pleasure affirm that it consists of three times, of the memory of past delights, and of the enjoyment of those that are present, and of the hope of what are to come; so that the three baskets are likened unto the three portions of time, and the cakes upon the baskets to those circumstances which are suitable to each of the portions; to the recollection of past joys, to the enjoyment of present pleasures, to the hope of future delights. And he who carries *all these things* is likened unto the lover of pleasure, who has

filled his faithless table, a table destitute of all hospitable and friendly salt, not with one kind of luxury only, but with almost every description and species of intemperance; and this is enjoyed by king Pharaoh alone, as if he were sitting at a public banquet, and devoting himself to a dispersion, and scattering, and defeat, and destruction of temperance; for the name Pharaoh, being interpreted, means "dispersion." And it is a magnificent and royal piece of conduct in him not to exult in the specious advantages of wisdom, but to pride himself on those pursuits of profligacy which it is unseemly to mention, wrecking himself on insatiable appetite, and gluttony, and effeminacy of life.

Therefore the birds, that is to say, the chances which never could have been anticipated by conjecture, coming from outward quarters and hovering around him, will attack and kindle every thing like fire, and will destroy every thing with their all-devouring power, so that there is not a single fragment left to the bearer of the baskets for his enjoyment though he had hoped to proceed with his inventions and contrivances, for ever and ever carrying them on in a safe place, so that they could never be taken from him.

And thanks be to God who giveth the victory and who renders the labours of the man who is a slave to his passions, though ever so carefully carried out, still unproductive and useless, sending down winged natures in an invisible manner for their destruction and overthrow. Therefore, the mind, being deprived of those things which it had made for itself, having, as it were, its neck cut through, will be found headless and lifeless, and like those who are fixed to a cross, nailed as it were to the tree of hopeless and helpless ignorance. For as long as none of these things come upon one which arrive suddenly and unexpectedly, then those acts which are directed to the enjoyment of pleasure appear to be successful; but when such evils descend upon them unexpectedly, they are overthrown, and their maker is destroyed with them.

XXXII. The dreams, therefore, of those men who divide those things which produce the taste according to every species of food, whether it be meat or drink, and such as is not necessary but superfluous, and sought only by the intemperate, have been sufficiently explained. But those of Pharaoh, who appears to exercise sovereignty over these men and over all

the powers of the soul, must now be investigated if we would proceed in order and consistently with our plan.

Pharaoh says, "In my dream I thought that I was standing by the bank of a river, and seven oxen came up as it were out of the river, of eminent plumpness in their flesh, and beautiful to the view, and fed in the green marsh; and behold, seven other oxen came up out of the river after them, evil to look at and ill-favoured, and lean in their flesh, such that I never saw any leaner in all Egypt; and the lean and ill-favoured oxen devoured the seven former oxen which were beautiful, and picked out, and they entered into their stomachs, and still their appearance remained ill-favoured, as I have described it at first. And when I had awoke I fell asleep again; and again I saw in my dream, and as it were seven ears of corn grew up on one stalk, full and beautiful. And seven other ears of corn also came up, lean and wind-beaten, close to them, and these last seven ears did swallow up the seven beautiful and full ears."*

You see now the preface of the lover of self who being easily moved, and changeable, and fickle, both in his body and soul, says, "I thought that I was standing," and did not consider that unchangeableness and steadiness belong to God alone, and to him who is dear to God. And the most evident proof of the unchangeable power which exists in him is this world, which is always in the same place and in the same condition. And if the world is immovable how can the Creator of it be any thing but firm?

In the second place the sacred scriptures are likewise most infallible witnesses; for it is said in them, where the words are put into the mouth of God, "I stand here and there, before you were dwelling upon the rock,"† which is an expression equivalent to, Thus am I who am visible to you, and am here: and I am there and everywhere, filling all places, standing and abiding in the same condition, being unchangeable, before you or any one of the objects of creation had any existence, being beheld upon the highest and most ancient authority of power, from which the creation of all existing things was shed forth, and the stream of wisdom flowed; "for I am he who brought the stream of water out of the solid rock,"‡ is said in another place. And Moses also bears witness to the immu-

* Genesis xli. 17. † Exodus xvii. 6. ‡ Deut. viii. 15.

tability of the Deity, where he says, "I saw the place where the God of Israel stood;"* intimating enigmatically that he is not given to change by speaking here of his standing, and of his being firmly established.

XXXIII. But there is in the Deity such an excessive degree of stability and firmness, that he gave even to the most excellent natures a share of his durability as his most excellent possession: and presently afterwards he, the most ancient author of all things, namely God, says that he is about to erect firmly his covenant full of grace (and that means his law and his word) in the soul of the just man as on a solid foundation, which shall be an image in the likeness of God, when he says to Noah, "I will establish my covenant with thee."† And besides this, he also indicates two other things, one that justice is in no respect different from the covenant of God, the other that other beings bestow gifts which are different from the persons who receive them; but God gives not only those gifts, but he gives also the very persons who receive them to themselves, for he has given me to myself, and every living being has he given to himself; for the expression, "I will establish my covenant with thee," is equivalent to, I will give thee to thyself.

And all those who are truly lovers of God desire eagerly to escape from the storm of multiplied affairs and business in which there is always tempestuous weather, and rough sea, and confusion, and to anchor in the calm and safe untroubled haven of virtue. Do you not see what is said about the wise Abraham who "is standing before the Lord?"‡ For when was it likely that the mind would be able to stand, no longer inclining to different sides like the balance in a scale, except when it is opposite to God, beholding him and being beheld by him? For perfect absence of motion comes to it in two ways, either from beholding him with whom nothing can be compared, because he is not attracted by anything resembling himself, or from being beheld by him, because . . . . . which he considered worthy, the ruler has assigned to himself alone as the most excellent of beings. And indeed a divine admonition was given in the following terms to Moses: "Stand thou here with me,"§ by which injunction both these

* Exodus xxiv. 10. † Genesis ix. 10.

‡ Genesis xviii. 22. § Deuteronomy v. 31.

things appear to be intimated, first, the fact that the good man is not moved, and secondly, the universal stability of the living God.

XXXIV. For, in real truth, whatever is akin or near to God is appropriated by him, becoming steady and stationary by reason of his unchangeableness; and the mind, being at rest, well knows how great a blessing rest is, and admiring, its own beauty, it conceives that either it is assigned to God alone as his, or else to that intermediate nature which is between the mortal and the immortal race; at all events, it says, "And I stood in the midst between the Lord and you,"* not meaning by these words that he was standing on his own feet, but wishing to indicate that the mind of the wise man, being delivered from all storms and wars, and enjoying unruffled calm and profound peace, is superior indeed to man, but inferior to God.

For the ordinary human mind is influenced by opinion, and is thrown into confusion by any passing circumstances; but the other is blessed and happy, and free from all participation in evil. And the good man is on the borders, so that one may appropriately say that he is neither God nor man, but that he touches the extremities of both, being connected with the mortal race by his manhood, and with the immortal race by his virtue.

And there is something which closely resembles this in the passage of scripture concerning the high priest; "For when," says the scripture, "he goes into the holy of holies, he will not be a man till he has gone out again."† But if at that time he is not a man, it is clear that he is not God either, but a minister of God, belonging as to his mortal nature to creation, but as to his immortal nature to the uncreate God. And he is placed in the middle class until he again goes forth among the things which belong to the body and to the flesh.

And this is the order of things according to nature, when the mind, being entirely occupied with divine love, bends its course towards the temple of God, and approaches it with all possible earnestness and zeal, it becomes inspired, and forgets all other things, and forgets itself also. It remembers him alone, and depends on him alone, who is attended by it as by a body-guard, and who receives its ministrations, to whom it

* Deuteronomy x. 10. † Leviticus xvi. 17.

consecrates and offers up the sacred and untainted virtues. But when the inspiration has ceased, and the excessive desire has relaxed, then it returns from divine things and becomes a man again, mixing with human affairs, which were awaiting him in the vestibule, that they might carry him off while gazing only on the things in them.

XXXV. Moses therefore describes the perfect man as being neither God nor man, but, as I said before, something on the border between the uncreated and the perishable nature. Again, he classes him who is improving and advancing towards perfection in the region between the dead and the living, meaning by "the living" those persons who dwell with wisdom, and by "the dead" those who rejoice in folly; for it is said with respect to Aaron, that "He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed."* For he who is making progress is not reckoned among those who are dead as to the life of virtue, inasmuch as he has a desire and admiration of what is honourable, nor among those who are living in extreme and perfect prosperity, for there is still something wanting to the end, but he touches both extremes; on which account the expression, "the plague was stayed," is very properly used rather than "the plague ceased;" for in those who are perfect the things which break, and crush, and destroy the soul cease; but in those who are advancing towards perfection, they are only diminished, as if they were only cut short and checked.

XXXVI. Since then all steadiness, and stability, and the abiding for ever in the same place unchangeably and immovably, is first of all seen in the living God, and next in the word of the living God, which he has called his covenant; and in the third place in the wise man, and in the fourth degree in him who is advancing towards perfection, what could induce the wicked mind, which is liable to all sorts of curses, to think that it is able to stand by itself, while it is in reality borne about as in a deluge, and dragged hither and thither by the incessant eddies of things flowing in through the dead and agitated body? "For I thought," says the scripture, "that I was standing on the bank of the river:"† and by the word river we say that speech is symbolically meant, since both these things are borne outward, and flow on with a vigorous and

* Numbers xvi. 48. † Genesis xli. 17.

sustained speed. And the one is at one time filled up with a great abundance of water, and the other with a quantity of verbs and nouns, and at another time they are both empty and relaxed, and in a state of quiescence; again, they are of use inasmuch as the one irrigates the fields, and the other fertilizes the souls of those who receive it. And at times they are injurious by reason of overflowing, as then the one deluges the land on its borders, and the other troubles and confuses the reason of those who do not attend to it.

XXXVII. Therefore speech is compared to a river, and the nature of speech is twofold, the one sort being better and the other worse; that is, the better kind which does good, and that of necessity is the worse kind which does harm; and Moses has given most conspicuous examples of each kind to those who are able to see, for he says, "For a river goes out of Eden to water the Paradise, and from thence it is divided into four branches:"* and by the name Eden he means the wisdom of the living God, and the interpretation of the name Eden is "delight," because I imagine wisdom is the delight of God, and God is the delight of wisdom, as it is said also in the Psalms, "Delight thou in the Lord."†

And the divine word, like a river, flows forth from wisdom as from a spring, in order to irrigate and fertilize the celestial and heavenly shoots and plants of such souls as love virtue, as if they were a paradise. And this sacred word is divided into four beginnings, by which I mean it is portioned out into four virtues, each of which is a princess, for to be divided into beginnings,‡ does not resemble divisions of place, but a kingdom, in order that any one, after having shown the virtues as boundaries, may immediately proceed to show the wise man who follows them to be a king, being elected as such, not by men, but by the only free nature which cannot err, and which cannot be corrupted; for those who behold the excellence of Abraham say unto him, "Thou art a king, sent from God among us:"§ proposing as a maxim, for those who study philosophy, that the wise man alone is a ruler and a king, and that virtue is the only irresponsible authority and sovereignty.

* Genesis ii. 10. † Psalm xxxvi. 4.

‡ There is an unavoidable obscurity in the translation here. The Greek word is ἀρχαί, which means beginnings, or principles, and also *governments.* § Genesis xxiii. 6.

XXXVIII. Accordingly, one of the followers of Moses, having compared this speech to a river, has said in the Psalms, "The river of God was filled with water;"* and it is absurd to give such a title to any of the rivers which flow upon the earth. But as it seems the psalmist is here speaking of the divine word, which is full of the streams of wisdom, and which has no part of itself empty or desolate, or rather, as some one has said, which is diffused everywhere over the universe, and is raised up on high, on account of the continued and incessant rapidity of that ever-flowing spring.

There is also another expression in the Psalms, such as this, "The course of the river makes glad the city of God."† What city? For the holy city, which exists at present, in which also the holy temple is established, at a great distance from any sea or river, so that it is clear, that the writer here means, figuratively, to speak of some other city than the visible city of God. For, in good truth, the continual stream of the divine word, being borne on incessantly with rapidity and regularity, is diffused universally over everything, giving joy to all. And in one sense he calls the world the city of God, as having received the whole cup of the divine draught, ... and being gladdened thereby, so as to have derived from it an imperishable joy, of which it cannot be deprived for ever.

But in another sense he applies this title to the soul of the wise man, in which God is said also to walk, as if in a city, "For," says God, "I will walk in you, and I will be your God in you."‡ And who can pour over the happy soul which proffers its own reason as the most sacred cup, the holy goblets of true joy, except the cup-bearer of God, the master of the feast, the word? not differing from the draught itself, but being itself in an unmixed state, the pure delight and sweetness, and pouring forth, and joy, and ambrosial medicine of pleasure and happiness; if we too may, for a moment, employ the language of the poets.

XXXIX. But that which is called by the Hebrews the city of God is Jerusalem, which name being interpreted means, "the sight of peace." So that do not look for the city of the living God in the regions of the earth, for it is not made of wood or of stone, but seek it in the soul which is free from

* Psalm lxv. 10. † Psalm xlv. 5. ‡ Leviticus xxvi. 12.

war, and which proposes to those who are endowed with acuteness of sight a contemplative and peaceful life; since where could any find a more venerable and holy abode for God amid all existing things, than the mind fond of contemplation, which is eager to behold every thing and which does not, even in a dream, feel a wish for sedition or disturbance? And again, the invisible spirit which is accustomed to converse with me in an unseen manner prompts me with a suggestion, and says, O my friend, you seem to be ignorant of an important and most desirable matter which I will explain to you completely; for I have also in a most seasonable manner explained many other things to you also. Know, then, O excellent man, that God alone is the truest, and most real, and genuine peace, and that every created and perishable essence is continual war.

For God is something voluntary, and mortal essence is necessity. Whoever, therefore, is able to forsake war, and necessity, and creation, and destruction, and to pass over to the uncreated being, to the immortal God, to the voluntary principle, and to peace, may justly be called the abode and city of God. Do not, therefore, consider it a different thing whether you speak of the sight of peace or the sight of God, as they are the same thing; because peace is not only the companion but also the chief of the powers of the living God, which are distinguished by many names.

XL. And, moreover, he says to the wise Abraham, "that he will give him an inheritance of land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,"* not meaning a portion of the land so much as a better portion in respect of our own selves. For our own body, and the passions which exist in it, and which are engendered by it, are likened to the river of Egypt, but the soul and the passions which are dear to that are likened to the river Euphrates. And here a doctrine is laid down, at once most profitable to life and of the highest importance, that the good man has received for his inheritance the soul and the virtues of the soul: just as, on the contrary, the wicked man has received for his share the body and the vices of the body, and those which are engendered by the body.

And the expression "from," has a double sense. One, that by which the starting point from which it begins is included;

* Genesis xv. 18.

the other that by which it is excluded. For when we say that from morning to evening there are twelve hours, or from the new moon to the end of the month there are thirty days, we are including in our enumeration both the first hour and the day of the new moon. And when any one says that such and such a field is three or four furlongs distant from the city, he clearly means to leave the city itself out of that measurement. So that now, too, we must consider that the expression, "from the river of Egypt," is to be understood so as not to include that river; for the writer intends to remove us to a distance from the things of the body which are seen to exist in a constant flow and course which is being destroyed and destroying, that so we may receive the inheritance of the soul with the imperishable virtues, which are, moreover, deserving of immortality.

Thus, therefore, by tracing it out diligently, we have found that praiseworthy speech is likened to a river; but speech which is deserving of blame is the very river of Egypt itself, untractable, unwilling to learn, as one may say in a word, lifeless speech; for which reason it is also changed into blood,* as not being able to afford sustenance. For the speech of ignorance is not wholesome, and it is productive of bloodless and lifeless frogs, which utter only a novel and harsh sound, a noise painful to the ear. And it is said, likewise, that all the fish in that river were destroyed. And by the fish are here figuratively meant the conceptions; for these things float about and exist in speech as in a river, resembling living things and filling the river with life. But in uninstructed speech all conceptions die; for it is not possible to find any thing intelligent in it, but only, as some one has said, some disorderly and unmusical voices of jackdaws.

XLI. We have now then said enough on these subjects. But since he not only confesses that he saw in his dream, a standing and a river, but also the banks of a river, as his words are, "I thought that I was standing by the bank (χείλος) of the river."† It must be desirable to say a few seasonable things also about the bank. Now there appears to be two most necessary objects on account of which nature has adapted lips (χείλη) to all animals, and especially to men; one for the sake of tranquillity, for they are the strongest bulwark and fortification of

* Exodus vii. 17. † Genesis xli. 17.

the voice; the other for the sake of distinctness, for it is through them that the stream of words issues forth. For when they are closed speech is checked; for it is impossible that it should be borne outward if they are not parted. And by these means nature prepares and trains man for both objects, speech and silence, watching the appropriate time for each employment.

As for instance, is anything said worth listening to? Then attend, raising no obstacle, in perfect quiet, according to the injunction of Moses, "Be silent and hear."* For of those persons who mix themselves up in contentious discussions there is not one who can properly be considered as either speaking or listening; but this is only advantageous to him who is about to do so.

Again, when you see, amid the wars and disasters of life, the merciful hand of God and his favourable power held over you and standing in defence of you, be silent yourself; for that champion stands in no need of any assistance. And there are proofs of this fact recorded in the sacred writings; such, for instance, as the verse, "The Lord will fight for us, and ye shall be silent."† And if you see the genuine offspring and the first-born of Egypt destroyed, namely desire, and pleasures, and pain, and fear, and iniquity, and mirth, and intemperance, and all the other qualities which are similar and akin to these, then marvel and be silent, dreading the terrible power of God; for, say the scriptures, "Not a dog shall move his tongue, nor shall anything, man or beast, utter a sound;"‡ which is equivalent to saying, It does not become either the impudent tongue to bark and curse—nor the man that is within us, that is to say, our dominant mind; nor the cattle-like beast which is within us, that is to say, the outward sense—to boast, when all the evil that was in us has been utterly destroyed, and when an ally from without comes of his own accord to hold his shield over us.

XLII. But there are many occasions which are not well suited to silence: and if we go to the language of ordinary prose, of which we may again see memorials laid up, how did there, ever an unexpected participation in good take place to any one? It is well, therefore, to give thanks and to sing hymns in honour of him who bestowed it. What, then, is the

* Deut. xxvii. 19. † Exodus xiv. 14. ‡ Exodus xi. 7.

good? The passion which is attacking us is dead, and is thrown out on its face without burial. Let not us delay, but standing still, let us sing that most sacred and becoming hymn, feeling that we are commanded to say to all men, "Let us sing unto the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."* But the rout and destruction of the passions is indeed a good, but not a perfect good; but the discovery of wisdom is a surpassing good, and when that is found all the people will sing harmonies and melodies, not with one kind of music only, but with every sort; for then, says the scripture, "Israel sang this song at the well;"† that is to say, in triumph for the fact that knowledge, which had long been hidden but which was sought for, had at length been found by all men, though lying deep by nature; the duty of which was to irrigate the rational fields existing in the souls of those men who are fond of contemplation.

What, then, shall we say? When we bring home the legitimate fruit of the mind, does not the sacred scripture enjoin us to display in our reason, as in a sacred basket, the first fruits of our fertility; a specimen of the glorious flowers, and shoots, and fruits which the soul has brought forth, bidding us speak out distinctly, and to utter panegyrics on the God who brings things to perfection, and to say, "I have cleared away the things which were holy out of my house, and I have arranged them in the house of God:"‡ appointing as stewards and guardians of them, men selected for their superior merit, and giving them the charge of these sacred things; and these persons are Levites, proselytes, and orphans, and widows. But some are suppliants, some are emigrants and fugitives, some are persons widowed and destitute of all created things, but enrolled as belonging to God, the genuine husband and father of the soul which is inclined to worship.

XLIII. In this way, then, it is most proper both to speak and to be silent. But the wicked adopt an exactly contrary course; for they are admirers of a blamable kind of silence, and of an interpretation open to reproach, practising both lines of conduct to their own destruction and that of others. But the greater part of their employment consists in saying what they ought not; for having opened their mouth and leaving it

* Exodus xv. 1. † Numbers xxi. 17. ‡ Deut. xxvi. 13.

unbridled, like an unrestrained torrent, they allow their speech to run on indiscriminately, as the poets say, dragging on thousands of profitless sayings; therefore those who have devoted themselves to the advocacy of pleasure and appetite, and every sort of excessive desire, building up irrational passion as a fortification against dominant reason, and preparing themselves for a contentious sort of discussion, have come at last to a regular dispute, hoping to be able to blind the race which is endowed with the faculty of sight, and to throw it down precipices, and into depths from which it will not be able at any future time to emerge. But some have not only put themselves forward as rivals to human virtue, but have proceeded to such a pitch of folly as to oppose themselves also to divine virtue. Therefore Pharaoh, the king of the land of Egypt, is spoken of as the leader of the company which is devoted to the passions; for it is said to the prophet, "Behold, he is going forth to the river, and thou shalt stand in the way to meet him, on the bank of the river;"* for it is the peculiar characteristic of the one man to go forth to the rapidity and continual pouring forth of the irrational passion; and it is also characteristic of the wise man to oppose with exceeding vigour the arguments on behalf of pleasure and desire, not with his feet, but with his mind, firmly and immoveably, standing on the bank of the river; that is to say, on the mouth and on the tongue, which are the organs of speech.

For standing firmly on these, he will be able to overturn and defeat the plausible specious arguments which advocate the cause of passion. But the enemy of the race which is endowed with the power of seeing, is the people of Pharaoh, which never ceased attacking, and persecuting, and enslaving virtue, until . . . . it paid the penalty of the evils which it inflicted . . . . . being overwhelmed in the sea of those iniquities . . . which it excited. . . . . So that that period exhibited an extraordinary sight, a victory which was in no doubt, and a joy greater than could have been hoped for.

On which account it is said, "And Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore."† Great indeed was the hand which fought for them, compelling those who had sharpened these organs against the truth to fall by the mouth, and lips, and

* Exodus vii. 15. † Exodus xiv. 30.

speech, so that they who had taken up these weapons against others should perish by their own arms and not by those of others. And this announces three most glorious things to the soul; one, the destruction of the passions of Egypt; another, that this has taken place in no other spot than near the salt and bitter springs, as if on the shore of the sea, by which sophistical reason, that enemy of virtue, is poured forth; and, lastly, the sight of the disaster. For no glorious thing can be invisible, but should be brought to the light and brilliancy of the sun. For so also the contrary, namely evil, should be thrust into deep darkness, and should be accounted deserving of night. And may it indeed by chance happen to some one to behold this: but what is really good should be always beheld by more piercing eyes. And what is so good as that what is good should live, and what is evil should die?

XLIV. There were, therefore, three persons who uttered atrocious words which were to reach even to heaven; these men devoted themselves to studies against nature, or rather against their own souls, saying that this universe was the only thing which was perceptible to the outward senses, and visible, having never been created, and being never destined to be destroyed, but being uncreated and imperishable, not requiring any superintendence, or care, or regulation, or management. Afterwards piling up fresh attempts one upon another, they built up a doctrine which was not approved, and raised it to a height like a tower; for it is said, "And the whole earth spoke one language,"* an inharmonious agreement of all the portions of the soul, for the purpose of overthrowing that which is the most comprehensive of all existing principles, namely, authority.

Therefore, a great and irresistible hand overthrew them when they were hoping to mount up even to heaven by their devices, for the purpose of destroying the everlasting kingdom; and it also dashed down the doctrine which they had built up; and the place is called confusion: a very appropriate name for such an audacious and wicked attempt; for what can be more productive of confusion than anarchy? Are not houses which have no manager full of offences and disturbances? And are not cities which are left unprovided with a king destroyed by the domination of the mob, the

* Genesis xi. 1.

opposite evil to kingly power, and at the same time the greatest of all evils? And have not countries, and nations, and regions of the earth, the governments of which have been put down, lost all their ancient and great prosperity?

And why need I speak of matters of human history? For even the other species of animals, flocks of birds, and herds of terrestrial beasts, and shoals of aquatic creatures, never exist without some leader of their company; but they always desire and always pay attention to their own leader, as being the sole cause of the advantages they receive; at whose absence they are scattered and destroyed. Do we suppose then, that in the case of earthly creatures, which are the most insignificant portion of the universe, authority is the cause of good things and anarchy the cause of evils, but that the world itself is not filled with extreme happiness by reason of the administration of God its king?

Therefore they have suffered punishment corresponding to their iniquities: for having polluted the sacred doctrine, they saw themselves polluted in like manner, all authority being taken away from among them; and being thrown themselves into confusion, but not having really caused any. But as long as they were left unpunished, being puffed up by insane pride, they sought to overthrow the authority of the universe by unholy speeches; and they set themselves up as rulers and kings, attributing the irresistible power of God to creatures which are perpetually coming to an end and being destroyed.

XLV. Therefore these ridiculous men giving themselves tragic airs and using inflated language, are accustomed to speak thus: we are they who are leaders; we are kings; On us all things depend. Who, except ourselves, is the cause of good and of the contrary? To whom, except to us, can the doing well or ill be truly attributed? They talk nonsense too in another manner, saying, that all things depend upon an invisible power, which they fancy presides over all human and divine affairs in the whole world.

Uttering such insolent falsehoods as these, if after intoxication they have become sober, and have come to themselves again, and feel ashamed of the intoxication to which they have given way coming under the dominion of the external senses, and if they reproach themselves for the evil actions which they

have been led on to commit by folly, giving ear to their new counsellor, which never flatters, and which cannot be corrupted, namely, repentance, having propitiated the merciful power of the living God by sacred hymns of repentance instead of profane songs, they will find entire forgiveness.

But if they are restive and obstinate for ever, and indulge in wanton behaviour, as if they were independent, and free, and the rulers of others, then by a necessity which is deaf to all entreaties and implacable, they will learn to feel their own nothingness in all things both small and great; for the driver who mounts upon them, putting a bridle, upon this world, as though it were a winged chariot, drawing back with main strength the reins which before were loose, and pressing the bits severely, will remind them by whip and spur of his authority as master, which they, like wicked servants, have forgotten by reason of the gentle and merciful temper of their manager; for bad servants, looking upon the gentleness of masters as anarchy, fancy themselves entirely free from the power of any master at all, until their owner checks their great and increasing disease by applying punishment as a remedy.

For which reason the expression is used of "a lawless soul, which with its lips distinguishes well-doing and evil-doing, and then will subsequently announce its own sin."* What sayest thou, O soul, full of insolence? For dost thou know what real good or real evil, real justice or real holiness, are? or what is suited to what? The knowledge of those things and the power of regulating them belongs to God alone, and to whoever is dear to him. And witness is borne to this assertion by the scripture in which it is said, "I will kill and I will cause to live; I will smite and I will heal."† But the mind which was wise in its own conceit had not even a superficial dreaming intimation of the things placed above it: but, wretched that it was, it was so completely carried away by the wind of vain opinion that it swore that those things which it had erroneously imagined stood firmly and solidly. If, therefore, the violence and convulsion of the disease begin to relax, the sparks of returning health becoming gradually re-kindled, will compel it at first to confess its error, that is to say, to reproach itself, and afterwards to become a suppliant at the

* Leviticus v. 4. † Deuteronomy xxxii. 39.

altar, entreating with prayers, and supplications, and sacrifices, that it may only obtain pardon.

XLVI. After this who can fairly raise the question why the historian of the scriptures has spoken of the river of Egypt only as having banks and has made no such mention of the Euphrates or of any other of the sacred rivers; for here he says, "Thou shalt stand in the way to meet him by the bank of the river." And yet perhaps some persons in a spirit of ridicule will say that it is not right to bring such matters as these forward for investigation, for that it rather displays a spirit of cavilling than does any good. But I imagine that such things, like sweetmeats, are prepared in the sacred scriptures, for the improvement of those who read them, and that we ought not to condemn the curiosity of those who investigate such matters, but that we should rather blame their indolence if they did not investigate them.

For our present discussion is not about the history of rivers but about ways of life, which are compared to the streams of rivers, running in opposite directions to one another. For the life of the good man consists in actions; but that of the wicked man is seen to consist only in worlds. And speech ..... in the tongue, and mouth, and lips, and* .....

A TREATISE

ON THE

LIFE OF THE WISE MAN MADE PERFECT BY INSTRUCTION

OR, ON

THE UNWRITTEN LAW, THAT IS TO SAY, ON ABRAHAM.

I. THE sacred laws having been written in five books, the first is called and inscribed Genesis, deriving its title from the creation (γένεσις) of the world, which it contains at the beginning; although there are ten thousand other matters also introduced which refer to peace and to war, or to fertility and barrenness, or to hunger and plenty, or to the terrible destructions which have taken place on earth by the agency of fire and water; or, on the contrary, to the birth and rapid

* The rest of this treatise is lost.

propagation of animals and plants in accordance with the admirable arrangement of the atmosphere, and the seasons of the year, and of men, some of whom lived in accordance with virtue, while others were associated with wickedness.

But since of these things some are portions of the world, and some are accidents, and since the world is the most perfect and complete of all things, he has nominally assigned the whole book to that subject.

We have then examined with all the accuracy that was in our power, in what manner the creation of the world was arranged in our previous treatises; but since it is necessary, to be consistent with the regular order in which the sacred history proceeds to go on, now to investigate the laws, we will for the present postpone the particular laws which are copies as it were; and first of all examine the more general laws which are, as it were, the models of the others. Now these are those men who have lived irreproachably and admirably, whose virtues are durably and permanently recorded, as on pillars in the sacred scriptures, not merely with the object of praising the men themselves, but also for the sake of exhorting those who read their history, and of leading them on to emulate their conduct; for these men have been living and rational laws; and the lawgiver has magnified them for two reasons; first, because he was desirous to show that the injunctions which are thus given are not inconsistent with nature; and, secondly, that he might prove that it is not very difficult or laborious for those who wish to live according to the laws established in these books, since the earliest men easily and spontaneously obeyed the unwritten principle of legislation before any one of the particular laws were written down at all.

So that a man may very properly say, that the written laws are nothing more than a memorial of the life of the ancients, tracing back in an antiquarian spirit, the actions and reasonings which they adopted; for these first men, without ever having been followers or pupils of any one, and without ever having been taught by preceptors what they ought to do or say, but having embraced a line of conduct consistent with nature from attending to their own natural impulses, and from being prompted by an innate virtue, and looking upon nature herself to be, what in fact she is, the most ancient and duly established of laws, did in reality spend their whole lives in

making laws, never of deliberate purpose doing anything open to reproach, and for their accidental errors propitiating God, and appeasing him by prayers and supplications, so as to procure for themselves the enjoyment of an entire life of virtue and prosperity, both in respect of their deliberate actions, and those which proceeded from no voluntary purpose.

II. Since then the beginning of all participation in good things is hope, and since the soul devoted to virtue pioneers and opens this path as a plain and easy one, being anxious to attain to that which is really honourable, the sacred historian has named the first lover of hope, Enos, giving him the common name of the whole race as an especial favour. For the Chaldæans call man Enos; as if he were the only real man, who lived in expectation of good things, and who is established in good hopes; from which it is evident that they do not look upon the man devoid of hope as a man at all, but rather as an animal resembling a man, inasmuch as he is deprived of that most peculiar possession of the human soul, namely hope. For which reason, being desirous to deliver an admirable panegyric on the hopeful man, the sacred historian tells us, first, that "he hoped in the father and creator of the universe," * and adds in a subsequent passage, "This is the book of the generation of men," † and of their fathers, and grand-fathers who had existed previously; but he conceived that they were the ancestors of the mixed race, that is to say, of that purer and thoroughly sifted race which is the really rational one; for, as the poet Homer, though the number of poets is beyond all calculation, is called "the poet" by way of distinction, and as the black [ink] with which we write is called "the black," though in point of fact everything which is not white is black; and as that archon at Athens is especially called "the archon," who is the archon eponymus and the chief of the nine archons, from whom the chronology is dated; so in the same manner the sacred historian calls him who indulges in hope, "a man," by way of pre-eminence, passing over in silence the rest of the multitude of human beings, as not being worthy to receive the same appellation.

And he has very properly called his first volume, the Book of the Generation of the Real Man, speaking with perfect correctness; because the man who is full of good hope is worthy

* *Genesis iv. 26.* Genesis v. 1.

of being described and remembered, not with such a memory as is given by a record in papers, which are hereafter to be destroyed by bookworms, but by that which exists in immortal nature, where the virtuous actions are regularly recorded.

If then any one were to reckon the generations, from the first man, who was made out of the earth, he will find him who, by the Chaldæans is called Enos, and in the Greek language ἄνθρωπος (the man), to be the fourth in succession, and in numbers the number four is honoured among other philosophers, who have studied and admired the incorporeal essences, appreciable only by the intellect, and especially by the all-wise Moses, who magnifies the number four, and says that it is "holy and praiseworthy;"* and the reasons for which this character has been given to it are mentioned in a former treatise. And the man who is full of good hope is likewise holy and praiseworthy; as, on the contrary, he who has no hope is accursed and blameable, being always associated with fear, which is an evil counsellor in any emergency; for they say, that there is no one thing so hostile to another, as hope is to fear and fear to hope, and perhaps this may be correctly said, for both fear and hope are an expectation, but the one is an expectation of good things, and the other, on the contrary, of evil things; and the natures of good and evil are irreconcileable, and such as can never come together.

III. What has now been said about hope is sufficient; and nature has placed her at the gates to be a sort of doorkeeper to the royal virtues within, which no one may approach who has not previously paid homage to hope. Therefore the lawgivers, and the laws in every state on earth, labour with great diligence to fill the souls of free men with good hopes; but he who, without any recommendation and without being enjoined to be so, is nevertheless hopeful, has acquired this virtue by an unwritten, self-taught law, which nature has implanted in him.

That which is placed in the next rank after hope is repentance for errors committed, and improvement; in reference to which principle Moses mentions next in order to Enos, the man who changed from a worse system of life to a better, who is called among the Hebrews Enoch, but as the Greeks would say, "gracious," of whom the following statement is made, "that Enoch pleased God, and was not found, because God transported him."† For transportation shows a change and

* Leviticus xix. 24. † Genesis v. 24.

alteration: and such a change is for the better, because it takes place through the providence of God; for every thing that is with God is in every case honourable and advantageous, since that which is destitute of any divine superintendence is useless and unprofitable.

And the expression, "he was not found,"* is very appropriately employed of him whose place was changed, either from the fact of his ancient blameable life being wiped out and effaced, and being no longer found, just as if it had never existed at all, or else because he whose place has been changed, and who is enrolled in a better class, is naturally difficult to be discovered. For wickedness is a very multiform and extensive thing, on which account it is known to many persons; but virtue is rare, so that it is not comprehended even by a few. And besides, the bad man runs about through the market-place, and theatres, and courts of justice, and council halls, and assemblies, and every meeting and collection of men whatever, like one who lives with and for curiosity, letting loose his tongue in immoderate, and interminable, and indiscriminate conversation, confusing and disturbing every thing, mixing up what is true with what is false, what is unspeakable with what is public, private with public things, things profane with things sacred, what is ridiculous with what is excellent, from never having been instructed in what is the most excellent thing in season, namely silence. And pricking his ears, because of the abundance of his leisure, and his superfluous curiosity, and love of interference, he is eager to make himself acquainted with the business of other people, whether good or bad, so as at once to envy those who are prosperous, and to rejoice over those who are not so; for the bad man is by nature envious and a hater of all that is good, and a lover of all that is evil.

IV. But the good man, on the contrary, is a lover of that mode of life which is not troubled by business, and withdraws, and loves solitude, desiring to escape the notice of the many, not out of misanthropy, for he is a lover of mankind, if any one in the world is so, but because he eschews wickedness, which the chief multitude eagerly embraces, rejoicing at what it ought to mourn over, and grieving at what it is becoming rather to rejoice. On which account the good man shuts himself up, and remains for the most part at home, scarcely going

* *This is not* the translation of the bible which says "and Enoch *walked with God,* and he was not, for God took him"

over his threshold, or if he does go out, for the sake of avoiding the crowds who come to visit him, he generally goes out of the city, and makes his abode in some country place, living more pleasantly with such companions as are the most virtuous of all mankind, whose bodies, indeed, time has dissolved, but whose virtues the records which are left of them keep alive, in poems and in prose, histories by which the soul is naturally improved and led on to perfection.

It is on this account that the sacred historian has said that the man whose place was changed was not found, inasmuch as he is difficult to find and hard to seek out. Therefore, such a man emigrates from ignorance to instruction, and from folly to wisdom, and from cowardice to courage, and from impiety to piety; and, again, from devotion to pleasure to temperance, and from vain-gloriousness to simplicity, qualities superior to all riches, and more valuable as a possession than any royal or imperial power. For if one may speak the plain truth, that wealth which is not blind, but which is clear-sighted, is the abundance of virtues, which we must at once conclude to be the genuine and legitimate predominance of good in comparison of all other bastard and falsely named powers, and to be the just and lawful superior of them all. But we must not be ignorant that repentance occupies the second place only, next after perfection, just as the change from sickness to convalescence is inferior to perfect uninterrupted health. Therefore, that which is continuous and perfect in virtues is very near divine power, but that condition which is improvement advancing in process of time is the peculiar blessing of a well-disposed soul, which does not continue in its childish pursuits, but by more vigorous thoughts and inclinations, such as really become a man, seeks a tranquil steadiness of soul, and which attains to it by its conception of what is good.

V. For which reason the sacred historian very naturally classes the lover of God and the lover of virtue next in order to him who repents; and this man is in the language of the Hebrews called Noah, but in that of the Greeks, "rest," or "the just man," both being appellations very well suited to the wise man. That of "the just man" most evidently so, for nothing is better than justice, which is the chief among virtues, and which receives the highest honours like the most beautiful member of a company; and the appellation "rest"

is likewise appropriate, since the opposite quality to rest is unnatural agitation, the cause of confusions, and tumults, and seditions, and wars, which the wicked pursue; while those who pay due honour to excellence cultivate a tranquil, and quiet, and stable, and peaceful life.

And in strict consistency with himself, the lawgiver also calls the seventh day "rest," which the Hebrews call "the sabbath;" not as some persons fancy, because after six days the multitude was restrained from its habitual employments, but because in real truth, the number seven is both in the world and in ourselves free from seditions and from wars, and is of all the numbers that which is the most averse to contention, and the greatest lover of peace. And a proof of what I have here asserted may be found in the powers which exist in us; for six of those powers, namely the five outward senses and uttered speech, stir up continued and ceaseless war, both by sea and land, some of them doing so from a desire for the objects of the outward senses, which if they cannot obtain they are grieved, and the last by divulging with unbridled mouth numbers of things which ought to be buried in silence. But the seventh power is that which proceeds from the dominant mind, which is more glorious than the other six powers, and which has by pre-eminent vigour obtained the mastery over them all, and when that retires, choosing solitude, and its own society, and living by itself, as one that has no need of any other, and that is all-sufficient for itself, being then emancipated from the cares and troubles that are found in the human race, embraces a calm and tranquil life.

VI. And the lawgiver magnifies the lover of virtue in such a way, that even when he is giving his genealogy, he does not trace him as he usually does other persons, by giving a catalogue of his grandfathers and great grandfathers, and ancestors who are numbered as men and women, but he gives a list of certain virtues; and almost asserts in express words that there is no other house, or kindred, or country whatever to a wise man, except the virtues and the actions in accordance with virtues.

"For these," says he, "are the generations of Noah; Noah was a just man, perfect in his generation, and one who pleased God."* But we must not be ignorant that when he says man

* Genesis vi. 9.

here, he does not mean merely to use the common expression for a rational mortal animal, but that he means to indicate in an eminent degree him who verifies the name, having driven away all the untameable and furious passions and brutal wickednesses of the soul; and as a proof of this, after the word man he adds as an epithet, "the just," saying, "a just man," as if no unjust person were a man at all, but to speak more properly a beast in the likeness of a man, and as if he alone were a man who is an admirer of justice; he also says that he was "perfect," intimating by this expression that he was possessed not of one virtue only but of all, and that being so possessed of them, he constantly exhibited every one of them according to his power and opportunities; and finally crowning him like a wrestler who has gained a glorious victory, he honours him moreover with a most noble proclamation, saying that "he pleased God," (and what can there be in nature that is more excellent than this panegyric?) which is the most visible proof of excellence; for if they who displease God are miserable, those who please him are by all means happy.

VII. It is not then without great correctness that after he has praised the man as being possessed of such great virtues he adds, "that he was perfect in his generation." Showing that he was not perfect absolutely, but that he was good in comparison with the others who lived at that time; for in a little time he will also speak of other wise men who were possessed of unconquerable and incomparable virtue, not merely if contrasted with the wicked, nor because they were better than the other men of their age, and as such were considered worthy of acceptance and pre-eminence, but because having received a well disposed nature, they preserved it without any error or change for the worse; not fleeing from evil habits, but never having once fallen into them, and being by deliberate purpose practisers of all virtuous actions and speeches, by which system they have adorned their life.

Those then are the most admirable of all men who have adopted free and noble inclinations, not in imitation of or by way of contrast to others, but from an inclination to genuine virtue and justice for its own sake; he also is to be admired who is superior to his own generation and his own age, and who is overcome by none of those things which the multitude follows; and he will be classed in the second rank, and nature

will give to such men the best of her prizes; and the second prize is of itself a great thing; for what is not a great and most desirable object which God offers to, and bestows upon men? And the greatest proof of this is to be found in the exceeding graces which this man attained to; for as that time bore an abundant crop of injustice and impiety, and so every country, and nation, and city, and house, and every separate individual was full of wicked practices, all men of free will and of deliberate purpose, as if in an arena, living with one another for the first rank in iniquity, and strove with all possible zeal and rivalry, every one seeking to surpass his neighbour in the magnitude of his wickedness, and failing in nothing which might render life blameable and accursed.

VIII. At whom God, being naturally indignant, and being angry that that which appeared to be the most excellent of animals, and which had been thought worthy of being reckoned akin to himself by reason of his participation in reason, when he ought to have practised virtue, devoted himself rather to wickedness, and to every species of vice, appointed a fitting punishment for them, and determined to destroy the whole race at that time existing by a deluge; and not only those who dwelt in the champaign country and in the lower districts, but those also who lived in the most lofty mountains, for the great deep,* being raised to a height which it had never reached before, burst through its mouths with its whole collective impetuosity into the seas existing among us, and they overflowed and inundated all the islands and continents; and incessant floods of everlasting fountains, and of native rivers and torrents combined together, mingled with one another, and rising to a vast height, so as to surmount everything. Nor indeed was the air tranquil, for a deep and unbroken cloud overspread the whole heaven, and there were fearful storms of wind, and roarings of thunder, and flashes of lightning, and rapid hurlings of thunderbolts, ceaseless storms of rain being poured forth, so that one might have thought that all the parts of the universe were hastening to dissolve themselves into the one element of the nature of water, until, while the water from above kept pouring down, and that below kept bursting up, the streams were raised to a height above

* Genesis vii. 11.

everything, so that they not only overwhelmed and hid from sight all the plains and all the level ground, but even the tops of the highest mountains, for every part of the earth was under water, so that it was wholly buried and carried away, and the world was mutilated of huge portions, and appeared in all its wholeness and integrity, fearful as it is to say or even to imagine such a thing, to be utterly crippled and destroyed.

And likewise the air, with the exception of that small portion which is about the moon, was wholly obscured, being overcast by the violence and impetuosity of the water which overran all the region belonging to it with irresistible might. Then were speedily destroyed all the crops and all the trees, for an unlimited quantity of water is as destructive to them as a scarcity, and innumerable flocks of animals, both tame and wild, perished at the same time; for it was natural when the most excellent race of all, that of man, had been destroyed, that none of the inferior races should be left, since they were only created to be slaves to his necessities, and to be in a manner subject to his authoritative commands as their master.

When such numbers then of such mighty evils had burst forth which that time poured out—for all the portions of the world, except the heaven itself, were moved in an unnatural manner—as if they were stricken with a terrible and deadly disease.

And one house alone, that of the aforesaid just and God-loving man who had received the two highest of all gifts, was preserved; one gift being, as I have said already, the not being destroyed with all the rest of mankind, the other that of becoming himself, at a subsequent period, the founder of a new generation of mankind; for God thought him worthy to be both the end of our race and the beginning of it, the end of those men who lived before the deluge, and the beginning of those who lived after the deluge.

IX. Such was he who was the most virtuous of all the men of his age, and such were the rewards which were allotted to him which the holy scriptures enumerate; and the arrangement and classification of the aforesaid three, whether you call them men or dispositions of the soul, is very symmetrical, for the perfect man is entire from the beginning; but he who has his place

changed is but half entire, having appropriated the earlier period of his life to wickedness, and the subsequent time to virtue to which he afterwards came over, and with which at that subsequent time he lived. But he who hopes, as his very name shows, has still a defect, for though he is always wishing for what is good, he is not as yet able to attain to it, but he is like those who are on a voyage, who while they are eager to reach the harbour, are still kept at sea without being able to anchor in port.

X. I have now then explained the character of the first triad of those who desire virtue. There is also another more important company of which we must now proceed to speak, for the former resembles those branches of instruction which are allotted to the age of childhood, but this resembles rather the gymnastic exercises of athletic men, who are really preparing themselves for the sacred contests, who, despising all care of getting their body into proper condition, labour to bring about a healthy state of the soul, being desirous of that victory which is to be gained over the adverse passions.

The particulars then on which each individual differs from the other, though all are hastening to one and the same end, we will hereafter examine more minutely; but it is necessary not to pass over in silence what it seems desirable to premise concerning the whole three taken together.

It happens then that they are all three of one household and of one family, for the last of the three is the son of the middle one, and the grandson of the first; and they are all lovers of God, and beloved by God, loving the only God, and being loved in return by him who has chosen, as the holy scriptures tell us, by reason of the excess of their virtues in which they lived, to give them also a share of the same appellation as himself; for having added his own peculiar name to their names he has united them together, appropriating to himself an appellation composed of the three names: "For," says God, "this is my everlasting name: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,"* using there the relative term instead of the absolute one; and this is very natural, for God stands in no need of a name. But though he does not stand in any such need, nevertheless he bestows his own title on the human race that they may

* Exodus iii. 15.

have a refuge to which to betake themselves in supplications and prayers, and so may not be destitute of a good hope.

XI. This then is what appears to be said of these holy men; and it is indicative of a nature more remote from our knowledge than, and much superior to, that which exists in the objects of outward sense; for the sacred word appears thoroughly to investigate and to describe the different dispositions of the soul, being all of them good, the one aiming at what is good by means of instruction, the second by nature, the last by practice; for the first, who is named Abraham, is a symbol of that virtue which is derived from instruction; the intermediate Isaac is an emblem of natural virtue; the third, Jacob, of that virtue which is devoted to and derived from practice. But we must not be ignorant that each of these men was endowed with all these powers, but that each derived his name from that one which predominated in him and mastered the others; for neither is it possible for instruction to be made perfect without natural endowments and practice, nor is nature able to arrive at the goal without instruction and practice, nor is practice unless it be founded on natural gifts and sound instruction.

Very appropriately, therefore, has he represented, as united by relationship, these three, which in name indeed are men, but in reality, as I have said before, virtues, nature, instruction, and practice, which men also call by another name, and entitle them the three graces (χάριτες), either from the fact of God having bestowed (κεχαρίσθαι) on our race those three powers, in order to produce the perfection of life, or because they themselves have bestowed themselves on the rational soul as the most glorious of gifts, so that the eternal name, as set forth in the scriptures, may not be used in conjunction with three men, but rather with the aforesaid powers; for the nature of mankind is mortal, but that of the virtues is immortal; and it is more reasonable that the name of the everlasting God should be conjoined with what is immortal than with what is mortal, since what is immortal is akin to what is imperishable, but death is hostile to it.

XII. We must, however, not remain in ignorance that the sacred historian has represented the first man, him who was formed out of the earth as the father of all those who existed before the deluge; and him who, with his whole family, was

the only person left out of so universal a destruction, because of his justice and his other excellencies and virtues, as the founder of the new race of men which was to flourish hereafter. And that venerable, and estimable, and glorious triad is comprehended by the sacred scriptures under one class, and called, "A royal priesthood, and a holy nation."* And its name shows its power; for the nation is further called, in the language of the Hebrews, Israel, which name being interpreted means, "seeing God."

But of sight, that which is exercised by means of the eyes is the most excellent of all the outward senses, since by that alone all the most beautiful of existing things are comprehended, the sun and the moon, and the whole heaven, and the whole world; but the sight of the soul which is exercised, through the medium of its dominant part excels all the other powers of the soul, as much as the powers of the soul excel all other powers; and this is prudence, which is the sight of the mind. But he to whose lot it falls, not only by means of his knowledge, to comprehend all the other things which exist in nature, but also to behold the Father and Creator of the universe, has advanced to the very summit of happiness. For there is nothing above God; and if any one, directing towards him the eye of the soul, has reached up to him, let him then pray for ability to remain and to stand firm before him; for the roads which lead upwards to him are laborious and slow, but the descent down the declivity, being rather like a rapid dragging down than a gradual descent, is swift and easy. And there are many things urged downwards, in which there is no use whatever, when God having made the soul to depend on his own powers, drags it up towards himself with a more vigorous attraction.

XIII. Let thus much, then, be said generally about the three persons, since it was absolutely necessary; but we must now proceed in regular order, to speak of those qualities in which each separate individual surpasses the others, beginning with him who is first mentioned. Now he, being an admirer of piety, the highest and greatest of all virtues, laboured earnestly to follow God, and to be obedient to the injunctions delivered by him, looking not only on those things as his commands which were signified to him by words and facts, but

* Exodus xix. 6.

those also which were indicated by more express signs through the medium of nature, and which the truest of the outward senses comprehends before the uncertain and untrustworthy hearing can do so; for if any one observes the arrangement which exists in nature, and the constitution according to which the world goes on, which is more excellent than any kind of reasoning, he learns, even though no one speaks to him, to study a course of life consistent with law and peace, looking to the example of good men. But the most manifest demonstrations of peace are those which the scriptures contain; and we must mention the first which also occurs the first in the order in which they are set down.

XIV. He being impressed by an oracle by which he was commanded to leave his country, and his kindred, and his father's house, and to emigrate like a man returning from a foreign land to his own country, and not like one who was about to set out from his own land to settle in a foreign district, hastened eagerly on, thinking to do with promptness what he was commanded to do was equivalant to perfecting the matter. And yet who else was it likely would be so undeviating and unchangeable as not to be won over by and as not to yield to the charms of one's relations and one's country? The love for which has in a manner—

"Grown with the growth and strengthened with the strength,"

of every individual, and even more, or at all events not less than the limbs united to the body have done.

And we have witnesses of this in the lawgivers who have enacted the second punishment next to death, namely, banishment, against those who are convicted of the most atrocious crimes: a punishment which indeed is not second to any, as it appears to me, if truth be the judge, but which is, in fact, much more grievous than death, since death is the end of all misfortunes, but banishment is not the end but the beginning of new calamities, inflicting instead of our death unaccompanied by pain ten thousand deaths with acute sensation.

Some men also, being engaged in traffic, do out of desire for gain sail over the sea, or being employed in some embassy, or being led by a desire to see the sights of foreign countries, or by a love for instruction, having various motives which attract them outwards and prevent their remaining where they are,

some being led by a love of gain, others by the idea of being able to benefit their native city at its time of need in the most necessary and important particulars, others seeking to arrive at the knowledge of matters of which before they were ignorant, a knowledge which brings, at the same time, both delight and advantage to the soul. For men who have never travelled are to those who have, as blind men are to those who see clearly, are nevertheless anxious to behold their father's threshold and to salute it, and to embrace their acquaintances, and to enjoy the most delightful and wished-for sight of their relations and friends; and very often, seeing the affairs, for the sake of which they left their country, protracted, they have abandoned them, being influenced by that most powerful feeling of longing for a union with their kindred.

But this man with a very few companions, or perhaps I might say by himself, as soon as he was commanded to do so, left his home, and set out on an expedition to a foreign country in his soul even before he started with his body, his regard for mortal things being overpowered by his love for heavenly things. Therefore giving no consideration to anything whatever, neither to the men of his tribe, nor to those of his borough, nor to his fellow disciples, nor to his companions, nor to those of his blood as sprung from the same father or the same mother, nor to his country, nor to his ancient habits, nor to the customs in which he had been brought up, nor to his mode of life and his mates, every one of which things has a seductive and almost irresistible attraction and power, he departed as speedily as possible, yielding to a free and unrestrained impulse, and first of all he quitted the land of the Chaldæans, a prosperous district, and one which was greatly flourishing at that period, and went into the land of Charran, and from that, after no very distant interval, he departed to another place, which we will speak of hereafter, when we have first discussedt he country of Charran.

XV. The aforesaid emigrations, if one is to be guided by the literal expressions of the scripture, were performed by a wise man; but if we look to the laws of allegory, by a soul devoted to virtue and busied in the search after the true God. For the Chaldæans were, above all nations, addicted to the study of astronomy, and attributed all events to the motions of the stars, by which they fancied that all the things in the *world were regulated*, and accordingly they magnified the

visible essence by the powers which numbers and the analogies of numbers contain, taking no account of the invisible essence appreciable only by the intellect. But while they were busied in investigating the arrangement existing in them with reference to the periodical revolutions of the sun, and moon, and the other planets, and fixed-stars, and the changes of the seasons of the year, and the sympathy of the heavenly bodies with the things of earth, they were led to imagine that the world itself was God, in their impious philosophy comparing the creature to the Creator.

The man who had been bred up in this doctrine, and who for a long time had studied the philosophy of the Chaldæans, as if suddenly awakening from a deep slumber and opening the eye of the soul, and beginning to perceive a pure ray of light instead of profound darkness, followed the light, and saw what he had never seen before, a certain governor and director of the world standing above it, and guiding his own work in a salutary manner, and exerting his care and power in behalf of all those parts of it which are worthy of divine superintendence.

In order, therefore, that he may the more firmly establish the sight which has thus been presented to him in his mind, the sacred word says to him, My good friend, great things are often made known by slight outlines, at which he who looks increases his imagination to an unlimited extent; therefore, having dismissed those who bend all their attention to the heavenly bodies, and discarding the Chaldæan science, rise up and depart for a short time from the greatest of cities, this world, to one which is smaller; for so you will be the better able to comprehend the nature of the Ruler of the universe.

It is for this reason that Abraham is said to have made his first migration from the country of the Chaldæans into the land of Charran.

XVI. But Charran, in the Greek language, means "holes," which is a figurative emblem of the regions of our outward senses; by means of which, as by holes, each of those senses is able to look out so as to comprehend the objects which belong to it. But, some one may say, what is the use of these holes, unless the invisible mind, like the exhibition of a puppet show, does from within prompt its own powers, which at one time losing and allowing to roam, and at another time holding back and restraining by force? He gives sometimes an harmo-

nious motion, and sometimes perfect quiet to his puppets. And having this example at home, you will easily comprehend that being, the understanding of whom you are so anxious to arrive at; unless, indeed, you fancy that the world is situated in you as the dominant part of you, which the whole common powers of the body obey, and which each of the outward senses follows; but that the world, the most beautiful, and greatest, and most perfect of works, of which everything else is but a part, is destitute of any king to hold it together, and to regulate it, and govern it in accordance with justice.

And if it be invisible, wonder not at that, for neither can the mind which is in thee be perceived by the sight. Any one who considers this, deriving his proofs not from a distance but close at hand, both from himself and from the circumstances around him, will clearly see that the world is not the first God, but that it is the work of the first God and Father of all things, who, being himself invisible, displays every thing, showing the nature of all things both small and great. For he has not chosen to be beheld by the eyes of the body, perhaps because it was not consistent with holiness for what is mortal to touch what is everlasting, or perhaps because of the weakness of our sight; for it would never have been able to stand the rays which are poured forth from the living God, since it cannot even look straight at the rays of the sun.

XVII. And the most visible proof of this migration in which the mind quitted astronomy and the doctrines of the Chaldæans, is this. For it is said in the scriptures that the very moment that the wise man quitted his abode, "God appeared unto Abraham,"* to whom, therefore, it is plain that he was not visible before, when he was adhering to the studies of the Chaldæans, and attending to the motions of the stars, not properly comprehending any nature whatever, which was well arranged and appreciable by the intellect only, apart from the world and the essence perceptible by the outward senses. But after he changed his abode and went into another country he learnt of necessity that the world was subject, and not independent: not an absolute ruler, but governed by the great cause of all things who had created it, whom the mind then for the first time looked up and saw; for previously a great mist was shed over it by the objects of the

* Genesis xii. 7.

external senses, which she, having dissipated by fervent and vivid doctrines, was scarcely able, as if in clear fine weather, to perceive him who had previously been concealed and invisible.

But he, by reason of his love for mankind, did not reject the soul which came to him, but went forward to meet it, and showed to it his own nature as far as it was possible that he who was looking at it could see it. For which reason it is said, not that the wise man saw God but that God appeared to the wise man; for it was impossible for any one to comprehend by his own unassisted power the true living God, unless he himself displayed and revealed himself to him.

XVIII. And there is evidence in support of what has here been said to be derived from the change and alteration of his name: for he was anciently called Abram, but afterwards he was named Abraham: the alteration of sound being only that which proceeds from one single letter, alpha, being doubled, but the alteration revealing in effect an important fact and doctrine; for the name Abram being interpreted means "sublime father;" but Abraham signifies, "the elect father of sound." The first name being expressive of the man who is called an astronomer, and one addicted to the contemplation of the sublime bodies in the sky, and who was versed in the doctrines of the Chaldæans, and who took care of them as a father might take care of his children. But the last name intimating the really wise man; for the latter name, by the word sound, intimates the uttered speech; and by the word father, the dominant mind. For the speech which is conceived within is naturally the father of that which is uttered, inasmuch as it is older than the latter, and as it also suggests what is to be said. And by the addition of the word elect his goodness is intimated.

For the evil disposition is a random and confused one, but that which is elect is good, having been selected from all others by reason of its excellence. Therefore, to him who is addicted to the contemplation of the sublime bodies of the sky there appears to be nothing whatever greater than the world; and therefore he refers the causes of all things that exist to the world. But the wise man, beholding with more accurate eyes that more perfect being that rules and governs all things, and is appreciable only by the intellect, to whom all things are subservient as to a master, and by whom every thing is

directed, very often reproaches himself for his former way of life, and if he had lived the existence of a blind man, leaning upon objects perceptible by the outward senses, on things by their very nature worthless and unstable.

The second migration is again undertaken by the virtuous man under the influence of a sacred oracle, but this is no longer one from one city to another, but it is to a desolate country, in which he wandered about for a long time without being discontented at his wandering and at his unsettled condition, which necessarily arose from it. And yet, what other man would not have been grieved, not only at departing from his own country but also at being driven away from every city into an inaccessible and impassable district? And what other man would not have turned back and returned to his former home, paying but little attention to his former hopes, but desiring to escape from his present perplexity, thinking it folly for the sake of uncertain advantages to undergo admitted evils? But this man alone appears to have behaved in the contrary manner, thinking that life which was remote from the fellowship of many companions the most pleasant of all.

And this is naturally the case; for those who seek and desire to find God, love that solitude which is dear to him, labouring for this as their dearest and primary object, to become like his blessed and happy nature. Therefore, having now given both explanations, the literal one as concerning the man, and the allegorical one relating to the soul, we have shown that both the man and the mind are deserving of love; inasmuch as the one is obedient to the sacred oracles, and because of their influence submits to be torn away from things with which it is hard to part; and the mind deserves to be loved because it has not submitted to be for ever deceived and to abide permanently with the essences perceptible by the outward senses, thinking the visible world the greatest and first of gods, but soaring upwards with its reason it has beheld another nature better than that which is visible, that, namely, which is appreciable only by the intellect; and also that being who is at the same time the Creator and ruler of both.

XIX. These, then, are the first principles of the man who loves God, and they are followed by actions which do not deserve to be lightly esteemed. But the greatness of them is *not evident to every one*, but only to those who have tasted of

virtue, and who are wont to look with ridicule upon the objects which are admired by the multitude, by reason of the greatness of the good things of the soul. Therefore, God, having approved of his conduct which I have mentioned, presently rewarded the virtuous man with a great gift, inasmuch as he preserved sound and free from all pollution his marriage, which was in danger of being plotted against by a powerful and incontinent man.

And the cause of this man's design upon it arose from this beginning; there having been a barrenness and scarcity of crops for a long time, owing to a long and immoderate period of rain which prevailed at one time, and to a great drought and heat which ensued afterwards. The cities of Syria being oppressed by a long continuance of famine, became destitute of inhabitants, all of them being dispersed in different directions for the purpose of seeking food and providing themselves with necessaries. Therefore, Abraham, hearing that there was unlimited abundance and plenty in Egypt, since the river there irrigated the fields with its inundations at the proper season, and since the winds by their salutary temperature brought up and nourished rich and heavy crops of corn, rose up with all his household to quit Syria and to go thither. And he had a wife of a most excellent disposition, who was also the most beautiful of all the women of her time. The Egyptian magistrates, seeing her and admiring her exquisite form, for nothing ever escapes the notice of men in authority, gave information to the king. And the king, sending for the woman and beholding her extraordinary beauty, gave but little heed to the dictates of modesty or to the laws which had been established with respect to the honour due to strangers, but yielding to his incontinent desires, conceived the intention in name, indeed, to marry her in lawful wedlock, but, in fact to seduce and defile her. But she, being destitute of all succour, as being in a foreign land, before an incontinent and cruel-minded ruler (for her husband had no power to protect her, fearing the danger which impended over him from princes mightier than he), at last, with him, took refuge in the only alliance remaining to her, the protection of God.

And the merciful and gracious God, who takes compassion on the stranger, and who fights on behalf of those who are unjustly oppressed, inflicted in a moment painful sufferings and

terrible chastisements on the king, filling his body and soul with all kinds of miseries difficult to be escaped or remedied, so that all his inclinations tending to pleasure were cut short, and, on the contrary, he was occupied with nothing but cares, seeking an alleviation from his endless and intolerable torments by which he was harassed and tortured day and night; and his whole household also received their share of his punishment, because none of them had felt any indignation at his lawless conduct, but had all consented to it, and had all but co-operated actively in his iniquity.

In this manner the chastity of the woman was preserved, and God condescended to display the excellence and piety of her husband, giving him the noblest reward, namely, his marriage free from all injury, and even from all insult, so as no longer to be in danger of being violated; a marriage which however was not intended to produce any limited number of sons and daughters, but an entire nation—the most God-loving of all nations— and one which appears to me to have received the offices of priesthood and prophecy on behalf of the whole human race.

XX. I have heard men versed in natural philosophy interpreting this passage in an allegorical manner with no inconsiderable ingenuity and propriety; and their idea is, that the man here is a symbolical expression for the virtuous mind, conjecturing from the interpretation of his name that what is intended to be indicated is the virtuous disposition existing in the soul; and that by his wife is meant virtue, for the name of his wife is, in the Chaldæan language, Sarah, but in Greek "princess," because there is nothing more royal or more worthy of pre-eminence than virtue. And the marriage in which pleasure unites people comprehends the connection of the bodies, but that which is brought about by wisdom is the union of reasonings which desire purification, and of the perfect virtues; and the two kinds of marriage here described are extremely opposite to one another; for in the marriage of the bodies it is the male partner which sows the seed and the female which receives it, but in the union which takes place with regard to the soul it is quite the contrary, and it is virtue which appears to be there in the place of the woman, which sows *good* counsels, and virtuous speeches, and expositions of

doctrines profitable to life; but the reason which is considered to be classed in the light of the man receives the sacred and divine seed, unless, indeed, there is any error in the names usually given; for certainly, in the grammatical view of the words, the word reason is masculine, and the word virtue has a feminine character.

But if any one, discarding the considerations of the names which tend to throw darkness over the subject, chooses to look at the plain facts without any disguise, he will know that virtue is masculine by nature, inasmuch as it puts things in motion, and arranges them, and suggests good conceptions of noble actions and speeches; but reason is feminine, inasmuch as it is put in motion by another, and is instructed and benefited, and, in short, is altogether the patient, as its passive state is its only safety.

XXI. All men, therefore, even the most vile, in word honour and admire virtue as far as appearance goes; but it is the virtuous alone who obey its injunctions; on which account the king of Egypt, who is a figurative representation of the mind devoted to the body, as if he were acting in a theatre, assumes the character of a pretended participation in temperance though being an intemperate man, and in continence though being an incontinent man, and in justice though an unjust man, and he invites justice to himself, being eager to obtain a good report from the multitude; and the governor of the universe seeing this, for God alone has power to look into the soul, hates him and rejects him, and by the most cruel tests and powers convicts him of an utterly false disposition.

But by what instruments are these tests carried out? Surely altogether by the parts of virtue which, whenever they enter, inflict great pain and severe wounds; for a torture is a deficiency of supply to that which is insatiable, and the torture of greediness is temperance; moreover, the man who is fond of glory is tortured while simplicity and humility are in the ascendent, and so is the unjust man when justice is extolled; for it is impossible for two hostile natures to inhabit one soul, namely, for wickedness and virtue, for which reason, when they do come together, endless and irreconcilable seditions and wars are kindled between them; and yet this is the case though virtue is of

a most peaceful disposition, and, as they say, is anxious whenever it is about to come to a contest of strength to make trial of its own powers first, so as only to contend if it has a prospect of being able to gain the victory; but if it finds its power unequal to the conflict, then it will never dare to descend into the arena at all, for it is not disgraceful to wickedness to be defeated, inasmuch as ingloriousness is akin to it; but it would be a shameful thing for virtue, to which glory is the most appropriate and the most peculiarly belonging of all things, on which account it is natural for virtue either to secure the victory, or else to keep itself unconquered.

XXII. It has been said then that the disposition of the Egyptians is inhospitable and intemperate; and the humanity of him who has been exposed to their conduct deserves admiration, for he* in the middle of the day beholding as it were three men travelling (and he did not perceive that they were in reality of a more divine nature), ran up and entreated them with great perseverance not to pass by his tent, but as was becoming to go in and receive the rites of hospitality: and they knowing the truth of the man not so much by what he said, as by his mind which they could look into, assented to his request without hesitation; and being filled as to his soul with joy, he took every possible pains to make their extemporaneous reception worthy of them; and he said to his wife, "Hasten now, and make ready quickly three measures of fine meal," and he himself went forth among the herds of oxen, and brought forth a tender and well-fed heifer, and gave it to his servant; and he having slain it, dressed it with all speed.

For no one in the house of a wise man is ever slow to perform the duties of hospitality, but both women and men, and slaves and freemen, are most eager in the performance of all those duties towards strangers; therefore, after having feasted, and being delighted, not so much with what was set before them, as with the good will of their entertainer, and with his excessive and unbounded zeal to please them, they bestow on him a reward beyond his expectation, the birth of a legitimate son in a short time, making him a promise which is to be confirmed to him by one the most

* Genesis xviii. 1, &c.

excellent of the three; for it would have been inconsistent with philosophy for them all to speak together at the same moment, but it was desirous for all the rest to assent while one spoke.

Nevertheless he did not completely believe them even when they made him this promise, by reason of the incredible nature of the thing promised; for both he and his wife, through extreme old age, were so old as utterly to have abandoned all hope of offspring; therefore the scriptures record that Abraham's wife, when she first heard what they were saying, laughed; and when they said afterwards, "Is anything impossible to God?" they were so ashamed that they denied that they had laughed; for Abraham knew that everything was possible to God, having almost learnt this doctrine as one may say from his cradle; then for the first time he appears to me to have begun to entertain a different opinion of his guests from that which he conceived at first, and to have imagined that they were either some of the prophets or of the angels who had changed their spiritual and soul-like essence, and assumed the appearance of men.

XXIII. We have now then described the hospitable temper of the man, which was as it were a sort of addition to set off his greater virtue; but his virtue was piety towards God, concerning which we have spoken before, the most evident instance of which is to be found in his conduct now recorded towards the strangers; but if any persons have fancied that house happy and blessed in which it has happened that wise men have stopped and abode, they should consider that they would not have done so, and would not even have looked into it at all, if they had seen any incurable disease in the souls of those who were therein, but I know not what excess of happiness and blessedness, I should say, existed in that house in which angels condescended to tarry and to receive the rites of hospitality from men, angels, those sacred and divine natures, the ministers and lieutenants of the mighty God, by means of whom, as of ambassadors, he announces whatever predictions he condescends to intimate to our race.

For how could they ever have endured to enter a human habitation at all, unless they had been certain that all the

inhabitants within, like the well-managed and orderly crew of a ship, obeyed one signal only, namely, that of their master, as the sailors obey the command of the captain? And how would they ever have condescended to assume the appearance of guests and men feasted hospitably, if they had not thought that their entertainer was akin to them, and a fellow servant with them, bound to the service of the same master as themselves? We must think indeed that at their entrance all the parts of the house became improved and advanced in goodness, being breathed upon with a certain breeze of most perfect virtue.

And the entertainment was such as it was fitting that it should be, the persons who were being feasted displaying at the banquet their own simplicity towards their entertainer, and addressing him in a guileless manner, and all of them holding conversation suited to the occasion. And it is a thing that deserves to be looked on as a prodigy, that though they did not drink they seemed to drink, and that though they did not eat they presented the appearance of persons eating. But this was all natural and consistent with what was going on. And the most miraculous circumstance of all was, that these beings who were incorporeal presented the appearance of a body in human form by reason of their favour to the virtuous man, for otherwise what need was there of all these miracles except for the purpose of giving the wise man the evidence of his external senses by means of a more distinct sight, because his character had not escaped the knowledge of the Father of the universe.

XXIV. This then is sufficient to say by way of a literal explanation of this account: we must now speak of that which may be given if the story be looked at as figurative and symbolical.

The things which are expressed by the voice are the signs of those things which are conceived in the mind alone; when, therefore, the soul is shone upon by God as if at noonday, and when it is wholly and entirely filled with that light which is appreciable only by the intellect, and by being wholly surrounded with its brilliancy is free from all shade or darkness, it then perceives a threefold image of one subject, one image of the living God, and others of the

other two, as if they were shadows irradiated by it. And some such thing as this happens to those who dwell in that light which is perceptible by the outward senses, for whether people are standing still or in motion, there is often a double shadow falling from them.

Let not any one then fancy that the word shadow is applied to God with perfect propriety. It is merely a catachrestical abuse of the name, by way of bringing before our eyes a more vivid representation of the matter intended to be intimated. Since this is not the actual truth, but in order that one may when speaking keep as close to the truth as possible, the one in the middle is the Father of the universe, who in the sacred scriptures is called by his proper name, I am that I am; and the beings on each side are those most ancient powers which are always close to the living God, one of which is called his creative power, and the other his royal power.

And the creative power is God, for it is by this that he made and arranged the universe; and the royal power is the Lord, for it is fitting that the Creator should lord it over and govern the creature. Therefore the middle person of the three, being attended by each of his powers as by body-guards, presents to the mind, which is endowed with the faculty of sight, a vision at one time of one being, and at another time of three; of one when the soul being completely purified, and having surmounted not only the multitudes of numbers, but also the number two, which is the neighbour of the unit, hastens onward to that idea which is devoid of all mixture, free from all combination, and by itself in need of nothing else whatever; and of three, when, not being as yet made perfect as to the important virtues, it is still seeking for initiation in those of less consequence, and is not able to attain to a comprehension of the living God by its own unassisted faculties without the aid of something else, but can only do so by judging of his deeds, whether as creator or as governor. This then, as they say, is the second best thing; and it no less partakes in the opinion which is dear to and devoted to God. But the first-mentioned disposition has no such share, but is itself the very God-loving and God-beloved opinion itself,

or rather it is truth which is older than opinion, and more valuable than any seeming.

But we must now explain what is intimated by this statement in a more perspicuous manner.

XXV. There are three different classes of human dispositions, each of which has received as its portion one of the aforesaid visions. The best of them has received that vision which is in the centre, the sight of the truly living God. The one which is next best has received that which is on the right hand, the sight of the beneficent power which has the name of God. And the third has the sight of that which is on the left hand, the governing power, which is called lord. Therefore, the best dispositions cultivate that being who exists of himself, without the aid of any one else, being themselves attracted by nothing else, by reason of all their entire attention being directed to the honour of that one being. But of the other dispositions, some derive their existence and owe their being recognized by the father to his beneficent power; and others, again, owe it to his governing power. My meaning in this statement is this:—

Men when they perceive that, under the pretext of friendship, some persons come to them, being in reality only desirous to get what they can from them, look upon them with suspicion, and turn away from them, fearing their insincere, and flattering, and caressing behaviour, as very pernicious. But God, inasmuch as he is not liable to any injury, gladly invites all men who choose, in any way whatever to honour him, to come unto him, not choosing altogether to reject any person whatever; and, in truth, he almost says in express words to those who have ears in the soul, "The most valuable prizes shall be offered to those who worship me for my own sake: the second best to those who hope by their own efforts to be able to attain to good, or to find a means of escape from punishments. For even if the service of this latter class is mercenary and not wholly incorrupt, still it nevertheless revolves within the divine circumference, and does not stray beyond it. But the rewards which shall be laid up for those who honour me for my own sake are rewards of affection; while those which are given to those who do so with a view to their

own advantage are not given through affection, but because they are not looked upon as aliens. For I receive him who wishes to be a partaker of my beneficent power to a participation in my good things, and him who out of fear seeks to propitiate my governing and despotic power, I receive so far as to avert punishment from him. For I am not unaware that, in addition to these men not becoming worse, they will become better, by gradually arriving at a sincere and pure piety by their constant perseverance in serving me. For even if the original dispositions, under the influence of which they originally endeavoured to please me, differ widely, still they must not be blamed, because they have in consequence only one aim and object, that of serving me."

But that what is seen is in reality a threefold appearance of one subject is plain, not only from the contemplation of the allegory, but also from that of the express words in which the allegory is couched. For when the wise man entreats those persons who are in the guise of three travellers to come and lodge in his house, he speaks to them not as three persons, but as one, and says, "My lord, if I have found favour with thee, do not thou pass by thy servant."* For the expressions, "my lord," and "with thee," and "do not thou pass by," and others of the same kind, are all such as are naturally addressed to a single individual, but not to many. And when those persons, having been entertained in his house, address their entertainer in an affectionate manner, it is again one of them who promises that he by himself will be present, and will bestow on him the seed of a child of his own, speaking in the following words: "I will return again and visit thee again, according to the time of life, and Sarah thy wife shall have a son."†

XXVI. And what is signified by this is indicated in a most evident and careful manner by the events which ensued. The country of the Sodomites was a district of the land of Canaan, which the Syrians afterwards called Palestine, a country full of innumerable iniquities, and especially of gluttony and debauchery, and all the great and numerous pleasures of other kinds which have been built up by men as a fortress, on which account it had been already condemned by the Judge of the whole world. And

* Genesis xviii. 3. † Genesis xviii. 10.

the cause of its excessive and immoderate intemperance was the unlimited abundance of supplies of all kinds which its inhabitants enjoyed. For the land was one with a deep soil, and well watered, and as such produced abundant crops of every kind of fruit every year. And he was a wise man and spoke truly who said—

> "The greatest cause of all iniquity
> Is found in overmuch prosperity."

As men, being unable to bear discreetly a satiety of these things, get restive like cattle, and become stiff-necked, and discard the laws of nature, pursuing a great and intemperate indulgence of gluttony, and drinking, and unlawful connections; for not only did they go mad after women, and defile the marriage bed of others, but also those who were men lusted after one another, doing unseemly things, and not regarding or respecting their common nature, and though eager for children, they were convicted by having only an abortive offspring; but the conviction produced no advantage, since they were overcome by violent desire; and so, by degrees, the men became accustomed to be treated like women, and in this way engendered among themselves the disease of females, an intolerable evil; for they not only, as to effeminacy and delicacy, became like women in their persons, but they made also their souls most ignoble, corrupting in this way the whole race of man, as far as depended on them. At all events, if the Greeks and barbarians were to have agreed together, and to have adopted the commerce of the citizens of this city, their cities one after another would have become desolate, as if they had been emptied by a pestilence.

XXVII. But God, having taken pity on mankind, as being a Saviour and full of love for mankind, increased, as far as possible, the natural desire of men and women for a connexion together, for the sake of producing children, and detesting the unnatural and unlawful commerce of the people of Sodom, he extinguished it, and destroyed those who were inclined to these things, and that not by any ordinary chastisement, but he inflicted on them an astonishing novelty, and unheard of rarity of vengeance; for, on a sudden, he commanded the sky to become overclouded and

to pour forth a mighty shower, not of rain but of fire; and as the flame poured down, with a resistless and unceasing violence, the fields were burnt up, and the meadows, and all the dense groves, and the thick marshes, and the impenetrable thickets; the plain too was consumed, and all the crop of wheat, and of everything else that was sown; and all the trees of the mountain district were burnt up, the trunks and the very roots being consumed.

And the folds for the cattle, and the houses of the men, and the walls, and all that was in any building, whether of private or public property, were all burnt. And in one day these populous cities became the tomb of their inhabitants, and the vast edifices of stone and timber became thin dust and ashes. And when the flames had consumed everything that was visible and that existed on the face of the earth, they proceeded to burn even the earth itself, penetrating into its lowest recesses, and destroying all the vivifying powers which existed within it so as to produce a complete and everlasting barrenness, so that it should never again be able to bear fruit, or to put forth any verdure; and to this very day it is scorched up. For the fire of the lightning is what is most difficult to extinguish, and creeps on pervading everything, and smouldering.

And a most evident proof of this is to be found in what is seen to this day: for the smoke which is still emitted, and the sulphur which men dig up there, are a proof of the calamity which befell that country; while a most conspicuous proof of the ancient fertility of the land is left in one city, and in the land around it. For the city is very populous, and the land is fertile in grass and in corn, and in every kind of fruit, as a constant evidence of the punishment which was inflicted by the divine will on the rest of the country.

XXVIII. But I have not gone through all these particulars for the sake of showing the magnitude of that vast and novel calamity, but because I desired to prove that of the three beings who appeared to the wise Abraham in the guise of men, the scriptures only represent two as having come to the country which was subsequently destroyed for the purpose of destroying its inhabitants, since the third did not think fit to come for that purpose. Inas-

much as he, according to my conception, was the true and living God, who thought it fitting that he being present should bestow good gifts by his own power, but that he should effect the opposite objects by the agency and service of his subordinate powers, so that he might be looked upon as the cause of good only, and of no evil whatever antecedently.

And kings too appear to me to imitate the divine nature in this particular, and to act in the same way, giving their favours in person, but inflicting their chastisements by the agency of others. But since, of the two powers of God, one is a beneficent power and the other a chastising one, each of them, as is natural, is manifested to the country of the people of Sodom. Because of the five finest cities in it four were about to be destroyed by fire, and one was destined to be left unhurt and safe from every evil. For it was necessary that the calamities should be inflicted by the chastising power, and that the one which was to be saved should be saved by the beneficent power. But since the portion which was saved was not endowed with entire and complete virtues, but was blessed with kindness by the power of the living God, it was deliberately accounted unworthy to have a sight of his presence afforded to it.

XXIX. This, then, is the open explanation which is to be given of this account, and which is to be addressed to the multitude. But there is another esoteric explanation to be reserved for the few who choose for the subjects of their investigation the dispositions of the soul, and not the forms of bodies; and this shall now be mentioned.

The five cities of the land of Sodom are a figurative representation of the five outward senses which exist in us, the organs of the pleasures, by the instrumentality of which all the pleasures whether great or small are brought to perfection; for we are pleased either when we behold the varieties of colours and forms, both in things inanimate and in those endowed with vitality, or when we hear melodious sounds, or again, we are delighted by the exercise of the faculty of taste in the things which relate to eating and drinking, or by that of the sense of smell in fragrant flavours and vapours, or in accordance with our faculty of touch when conversant with soft, or hot, or smooth things.

Now of these five outward senses there are three which have

the greatest resemblance to the brute beasts and to slaves, namely the senses of taste, smell, and touch: as it is with reference to these that those species of beasts and cattle which are the most greedy and the most strongly inclined to sexual connections are the most vehemently excited. For all day and all night they are either glutting themselves insatiably with food, or else in a state of eagerness for sexual connection. But there are two of these outward senses which have something philosophical and pre-eminent in them, namely, sight and hearing. But the ears are in some degree more slow and more effeminate than the eyes, since the latter go with promptness and courage to what is to be seen, and do not wait until the objects themselves are in motion, but go forward to meet them, and desire to move themselves so as to face them.

But the sense of hearing, inasmuch as that is slow and more effeminate, may be classed in the second rank, and the sense of seeing may be allowed an especial pre-eminence and privilege: for God has made this sense a sort of rqueen of the rest, placing it above them all, and stationing it as it were on a citadel, has made it of all the senses in the closest connection with the soul; and any one may conjecture this from the common changes which take place in its essential organs; for when grief exists in the soul of man, the eyes are full of concern and melancholy; and on the other hand, when joy is in our heart the eyes smile and rejoice; and when fear gets the upper hand they are full of turbulent and disorderly confusion, and are subject to all kinds of irregular motions, and quiverings, and distortions.

Again, if anger occupies us, the sight becomes more fierce and bloodshot; and when we are considerating or deliberating, the eyes are tranquil and motionless, and almost as intent as the mind itself; just as at moments of the relaxation and indifference of the mind, the eyes also are relaxed and indifferent; when a friend approaches the feeling of goodwill towards him is proclaimed by a calm and serene look; on the other hand, if we meet with an enemy, the eyes give an early indication of the displeasure of the soul; when our mind is inspired by boldness, our eyes bound forward and are ready to start from our heads; when we are oppressed

with feelings of shame or modesty, they are gentle and repressed.

And, in short, we may say that the sight has been created to be an exact image of the soul, which is thus beautifully represented by it through the perfection of the Creator's skill, the eyes showing a visible representation of it, as in a mirror, since the soul has no visible nature in itself; but it is not in this particular alone that the beauty of the eyes exceeds the rest of the outward senses, but also because the use of the other senses is interrupted during our waking moments; for we must not include in our statement the inactivity which results from sleep; for they are at rest whenever there is not some external object to put them in motion; but the energies of the eyes when they are open are continuous and uninterrupted, as the eyes are never satiated or wearied, but continue to operate in accordance with the connection which they have with the soul; and the soul itself is everlastingly awake, and is in perpetual motion both night and day; but to the eyes, as being to a great degree partakers of the fleshly nature, a self sufficient gift was given, to be able to continue exercising their appropriate energies during one half of the entire period of life.

XXX. But we must now proceed to speak of that which is the most necessary part of all, the advantage which we derive from the eyes. For it is to sight alone of the external senses that God has caused light to arise, which is both the most beautiful of all existing things, and is, moreover, the first thing which is pronounced in the sacred scriptures to be good. Now the nature of light is twofold: for there is one light which proceeds from the fire which we use, a perishable light proceeding from a perishable material, and one which admits of being extinguished. But the other kind is inextinguishable and imperishable, descending to us from above from heaven, as if every one of the stars was pouring down its beams upon us from an everlasting spring. And the sense of sight associates with each of these kinds of light, and through the medium of both of them does it approach the objects of sight so as to arrive at a most accurate comprehension of them. Why now need we attempt to panegyrize the eyes further by a speech,

when God has engraved their true praises on pillars erected in heaven, namely, the stars? For for what purpose were the rays of the sun, and the beams of the moon, and the light of all the other planets and fixed stars called into existence, except as fields for the energies of the eyes in their service of seeing? On which account men, using the most excellent of all gifts, contemplate the things which exist in the world, the earth, the plants, the animals, the fruits of the earth, the seas, the effusion of waters springing from the earth and gushing forth in torrents and floods, and the varieties of fountains, some of which give forth cold and others hot water, and the natures of all things that exist in the air; and all the different species, of which we thus arrive at the knowlege, are innumerable and indescribable, and cannot be comprised in speech. And above all these things, the eyes can behold the heaven, which is truly a world created in another world, and it can also survey the beauties and divine images existing in heaven. Which now of the other external senses can boast that it has arrived at such a pitch of power as this?

XXXI. But now, dismissing the consideration of those of the outward senses which are in the stables, as it were, fattening up an animal which is born with us, namely, appetite, let us investigate the nature of that sense which receives speech, namely, hearing; the continued and vigorous, and most perfect course of which exists in the atmosphere which surrounds the earth, when the violence of the winds and the noise of thunder sound with a great dragging noise and terrible crash. But the eyes in a single moment can reach from earth to heaven, and taking in the extremest boundaries of the universe, reaching at the same moment to the east and to the west, and to the north and to the south, so as to survey them all at once, drag the mind towards what is visible. And the mind, at once receiving a similar impression, does not continue quiet, but being in perpetual motion, and never slumbering, receiving from the sight the power of observing the objects appreciable by the intellect, comes to consider whether these things which are brought visibly before it are uncreated, or whether they have derived their origin from creation; also, whether they are bounded or infinite. Again, whether there are many worlds or only

one; also, whether there are five elements of the whole universe, or whether heaven and the heavenly bodies have a peculiar and separate nature of their own, having received a more divine conformation, differing from that of the rest of the world.

Again, by these means it considers if the world has been created, by whom it has been created, and who the creator is as to his essence or quality, and with what design he made it, and what he is doing now, and what his mode of existence or cause of life is; and all other such questions as the excellently-endowed mind when cohabiting with wisdom is accustomed to examine.

These, and similar subjects, belong to philosophers, from which it is plain that wisdom and philosophy have not derived their origin from anything else that exists in us except from that queen of the outward senses, the sight, which God saved alone of the region of the body when he destroyed the other four, because these last were slaves to the flesh and to the passions of the flesh; but the sight alone was able to raise its head and to look up, and to find other sources of delight far superior to those proceeding from the bodily pleasures, those, namely, that are derived from the contemplation of the world and the things in it. Therefore it was appropriate for one of the five outward senses, namely, the sight, like one city in the Pentapolis, to receive an especial reward and honour, and to remain while the others were destroyed, because it is not only conversant with mortal objects as they are, but is able also to forsake such, and to depart to the imperishable natures, and to rejoice in the sight of them.

On which account the holy scriptures very beautifully represent it as "a little city, and yet not a little one,"* describing the power of sight under this figure. For it is said to be little, inasmuch as it is but a small portion of the faculties which exist in us; and yet great, inasmuch as it desires great things, being eager to behold the entire heaven and the whole world.

XXXII. We have now, then, given a full explanation concerning the vision which appeared to Abraham, and concerning his celebrated and all-glorious hospitality, in which the entertainer, who appeared to himself to be entertaining

* Genesis xix. 20.

others, was himself entertained; expounding every part of the passage with as much accuracy as we were able. But we must not pass over in silence the most important action of all, which is worthy of being listened to. For I was nearly saying that it is of more importance than all the actions of piety and religion put together. So we must say what seems to be seasonable concerning it.

A legitimate son is borne to the wise man by his wedded wife, a beloved and only son, very beautiful in his person, and very excellent in his disposition. For he was already beginning to display the more perfect exercises of his age, so that his father felt a most strong and vehement affection for him, not only from the impulse of natural regard, but also from the influence of deliberate opinion, from being, as it were, a judge of his character. To him, then, being conscious of such a disposition, an oracular command suddenly comes, which was never expected, ordering him to sacrifice this son on a certain very lofty hill, distant three days' journey from the city. And he, although attached to his child by an indescribable fondness, neither changed colour, nor wavered in his soul, but remained firm in an unyielding and unalterable purpose, as he was at first. And being wholly influenced by love towards God, he forcibly repressed all the names and charms of the natural relationship: and without mentioning the oracular command to any one of his household out of all his numerous body of servants, he took with him the two eldest, who were most thoroughly attached to their master, as if he were bent upon the celebration of some ordinary divine rite, and went forth with his son, making four in all.

And when, looking as it were from a watch-tower, he saw the appointed place afar off, he bade his servants remain there, and he gave his son the fire and the wood to carry, thinking it proper for the victim himself to be burdened with the materials for the sacrifice, a very light burden, for nothing is less troublesome than piety. And as they proceeded onwards with equal speed, not marching more rapidly with their bodies than with their minds along that short road of which holiness is the end, they at last arrive at the appointed place. And the father collected stones wherewith to build the altar; and when his son saw everything else

prepared for the celebration of the sacrifice, but no animal, he looked to his father and said, "My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the victim for the burnt sacrifice?" * Therefore, any other father, knowing what he was about to do, and being depressed in his soul, would have been thrown into confusion by his son's words, and being filled with tears, would, out of his excessive affliction, by his silence have betrayed what was about to be done; but Abraham, betraying no alteration of voice, or countenance, or intention, looking at his son with steady eye, answered his question with a determination more steady still, "My child," said he, "God will provide himself a victim for the burnt offering," although we are in a vast desert where perhaps you despair of such a thing being found; but all things are possible to God, even all such things as are impossible and unintelligible to men. And even while saying this, he seizes his son with all rapidity, and places him on the altar, and having taken his knife in his right hand, he raised it over him as if to slay him; but God the Saviour stopped the deed in the middle, interrupting him by a voice from heaven, by which he ordered him to stay his hand, and not to touch the child: calling the father by name twice, so as to turn him and divert him from his purpose, and forbid him to complete the sacrifice.

XXXIII. And so Isaac is saved, God supplying a gift instead of him, and honouring him who was willing to make the offering in return for the piety which he had exhibited. But the action of the father, even though it was not ultimately given effect to, is nevertheless recorded and engraved as a complete and perfect sacrifice, not only in the sacred scriptures, but also in the minds of those who read them. But to those who are fond of reviling and disparaging everything, and who are by their invariable habits accustomed to prefer blaming to praising the action which Abraham was enjoined to perform, it will not appear a great and admirable deed, as we imagine it to have been. For such persons say that many other men, who have been very affectionate to their relations and very fond of their children, have given up their sons; some in order that they might be sacrificed for their country to deliver it either from war, or from drought,

* Genesis xxii. 7.

or from much rain, or from disease and pestilence; and others to satisfy the demands of some habitual religious observances, even though there may be no real piety in them.

At all events they say that some of the most celebrated men of the Greeks, not merely private individuals but kings also, caring but little for the children whom they have begotten, have, by means of their destruction secured safety to mighty and numerous forces and armies, arrayed together in an allied body, and have voluntarily slain them as if they had been enemies. And also that barbarous nations have for many ages practised the sacrifice of their children as if it were a holy work and one looked upon with favour by God, whose wickedness is mentioned by the holy Moses. For he, blaming them for this pollution, says, that "They burn their sons and their daughters to their gods."* And they say that to this very day the Gymnosophists among the Indians, when that long or incurable disease, old age, begins to attack them, before it has got a firm hold of them, and while they might still last for many years, kindle a fire and burn themselves. And, moreover, when their husbands are already dead, they say that their wives rush cheerfully to the same funeral pile, and whilst living endure to be burnt along with their husbands' bodies. One may well admire the exceeding courage of these women, who look thus contemptuously on death, and disdain it so exceedingly that they hasten and run impetuously towards it as if they were grasping immortality.

XXXIV. But why, say they, ought one to praise Abraham as the attempter of a wholly novel kind of conduct, when it is only what private men and kings, and even whole nations do at appropriate seasons? But I will make the following reply to the envy and ill-temper of these men.

Of those who sacrifice their childen, some do so out of habit, as they say some of the barbarians do; others do it because they are unable by any other means to place on a good footing some desperate and important dangers threatening their cities and countries. And of these men, some have given up their children because they have been constrained by those more powerful than themselves: and others, out of a thirst for glory, and honour, and for renown

* Deuteronomy xii. 31.

at the present moment, and celebrity in all future ages. Now those who sacrifice their children out of deference to custom, perform, in my opinion, no great exploit; for an inveterate custom is often as powerful as nature itself; so that it diminishes the terrible impression made by the action to be done, and makes even the most miserable and intolerable evils light to bear. Again: surely, they who offer up their children out of fear deserve no praise; for praise is only given to voluntary good actions, but what is involuntary, is ascribed to other causes than the immediate actors—to the occasion, or to chance, or to compulsion from men.

Again, if any one, out of a desire for glory, abandons his son or his daughter, he would justly be blamed rather than praised; seeking to acquire honour by the death of his dearest relations, while, even if he had glory, he ought rather to have risked the loss of it to secure the safety of his children. We must investigate, therefore, whether Abraham was under the influence of any one of the aforesaid motives, custom, or love of glory, or fear, when he was about to sacrifice his son.

Now Babylon, and Mesopotamia, and the nation of the Chaldæans, do not receive the custom of sacrificing their children; and these are the countries in which Abraham had been brought up and had lived most of his time; so that we cannot imagine that his sense of the misfortune that he was commanded to inflict upon himself was blunted by the frequency of such events. Again, there was no fear from men which pressed upon him, for no one knew of this oracular command which had been given to him alone, nor was there any common calamity pressing upon the land in which he was living, such as could only be remedied by the destruction of his most excellent son.

May it not have been, however, from a desire to obtain praise from the multitude that he proceeded to this action? But what praise could be obtained in the desert, when there was no one likely to be present who could possibly say anything in his favour, and when even his two servants were left at a distance on purpose that he might not seem to be hunting after praise, or to be making a display by bringing *witnesses* with him to see the greatness of his devotion?

XXXV. Therefore putting a barrier on their unbridled and evil-speaking mouths, let them moderate that envy in themselves which hates everything that is good, and let them forbear to attack the virtues of men who have lived excellently, which they ought rather to reward and decorate with panegyric. And that this action of Abraham's was in reality one deserving of praise and of all love, it is easy to see from many circumstances. In the first place, then, he laboured above all men to obey God, which is thought an excellent thing, and an especial object for all men's desire, by all right-minded persons, to such a degree, that he never omitted to perform anything which God commanded him, not even if it was full of arrogance and ingloriousness, or even of positive pain and misery; for which reason he also bore, in a most noble manner, and with the most unshaken fortitude, the command given to him respecting his son.

In the second place, though it was not the custom in the land in which he was living, as perhaps it is among some nations, to offer human sacrifices, and custom, by its frequency, often removes the horror felt at the first appearance of evils, he himself was about to be the first to set the example of a novel and most extraordinary deed, which I do not think that any human being would have brought himself to submit to, even if his soul had been made of iron or of adamant; for as some one has said,—

"'Tis a hard task with nature to contend."

In the second place, after he had become the father of this his only legitimate son, he, from the moment of his birth, cherished towards him all the genuine feelings of affection, which exceeds all modest love, and all the ties of friendship which have ever been celebrated in the world. There was added also, this most forcible charm of all, that he had become the father of this son not in the prime of his life, but in his old age. For parents become to a certain degree insane in their affection for children of their old age, either from the circumstance of their having been wishing for their birth a long time, or else because they have no longer any hope that they shall have any more; nature having taken her stand there as at the extreme and furthest limit.

Now there is nothing unnatural or extraordinary in devoting one child to God out of a numerous family, as a sort of first fruits of all one's children, while one still has pleasure in those who remain alive, who are no small comfort and alleviation of the grief felt for the one who is sacrificed. But the man who gives the only beloved son that he is possessed of performs an action beyond all powers of language to praise, as he is giving nothing to his own natural affection, but inclining with his whole will and heart to show his devotion to God. Accordingly this is an extraordinary and almost unprecedented action which was done by Abraham.

For other men, even if they have yielded up their children to be sacrificed on behalf of the safety of their native land or of their armies, have either remained at home themselves, or have kept at a distance from the altar of sacrifice; or at least, if they have been present they have averted their eyes, and left others to strike the blow which they have not endured to witness. But this man, like a priest of sacrifice himself, did himself begin to perform the sacred rite, although he was a most affectionate father of a son who was in all respects most excellent. And, perhaps, according to the usual law and custom of burnt offerings he was intending to solemnise the rite by dividing his son limb by limb. And so he did not divide his feelings and allot one part of his regard to his son and another part to piety to God: but he devoted his whole soul, entire and undivided, to holiness; thinking but little of the kindred blood which flowed in the victim.

Now of all the circumstances which we have enumerated what is there which others have in common with Abraham? What is there which is not peculiar to him, and excellent beyond all power of language to praise? So that every one who is not by nature envious and a lover of evil must be struck with amazement and admiration for his excessive piety, even if he should not call at once to mind all the particulars on which I have been dwelling, but only some one of the whole number; for the conception of any one of these particulars is sufficient by a brief and faint outline to display the greatness and loftiness of the father's soul; though there is nothing petty in the action of the wise man.

XXXVI. But the things which we have here been saying do not appear solely in the plain and explicit language of the text of the holy scriptures; but they appear, moreover, to exhibit a nature which is not so evident to the multitude, but which they who place the objects of the intellect above those perceptible by the outward senses, and who are able to appreciate them, recognise. And this nature is of the following description.

The victim who was about to be sacrificed is called in the Chaldæan language, Isaac; but if this name be translated into the Grecian language, it signifies "laughter;" and this laughter is not understood to be that laughter of the body which is frequent in childish sport, but is the result of a settled happiness and rejoicing of the mind. This kind of laughter the wise man is appropriately said to offer as a sacrifice to God; showing thus, by a figure, that to rejoice does properly belong to God alone. For the human race is subject to sorrow and to exceeding fear, from evils which are either present or expected, so that men are either grieved at unexpected evils actually pressing upon them, or are kept in suspense, and disquietude, and fear with respect to those which are impending. But the nature of God is free from grief, and exempt from fear, and enjoys an immunity from every kind of suffering, and is the only nature which possesses complete happiness and blessedness.

Now to the disposition which makes this confession in sincerity, God is merciful, and compassionate, and kind, driving envy to a distance from him; and to it he gives a gift in return, to the full extent of the power of the person benefited to receive it, and he all but gives such a person this oracular warning, saying "I well know that the whole species of joy and rejoicing is the possession of no other being but me, who am the Father of the universe; nevertheless, though it belongs to me, I have no objection to those who deserve it enjoying a share of it. But who can be deserving to do so, save he who obeys me and my will? for to this man it shall be given to feel as little grief as possible and as little fear as possible, proceeding along that road which is inaccessible to passions and vices, but which is frequented by excellence of soul and virtue."

And let no one fancy that that unmixed joy, which is without any alloy of sorrow, descends from heaven to the earth, but rather, that it is a combination of the two, that which is the better being predominant in the mixture; in the same manner as the light in heaven is unalloyed and free from any admixture of darkness, but in the sublunary atmosphere it is mingled with dark air.

For this reason, it seems to me to have been, that Sarah,* the namesake of virtue, who had previously laughed, denied her laughter to the person who questioned her as to the cause of it, fearing lest she might be deprived of her rejoicing, as belonging to no created being, but to God alone; on which account the holy Word encouraged her, and said, "Be not afraid," thou hast laughed a genuine laugh, and thou hast a share in real joy; for the Father has not permitted the race of mankind to be wholly devoured by griefs, and sorrows, and incurable anguish, but has mingled in their existence something of a better nature, thinking it fitting that the soul should sometimes enjoy rest and tranquillity; and he has also designed that the souls of wise men should be pleased and delighted for the greater portion of their existence with the contemplation of the soul.

XXXVII. This is enough to say about the piety of the man, though there is a vast abundance of other things which might be brought forward in praise of it. We must also investigate his skill and wisdom as displayed towards his fellow men; for it belongs to the same character to be pious towards God and affectionate towards man; and both these qualities, of holiness towards God and justice towards man, are commonly seen in the same individual. Now it would take a long time to go through all the instances and actions which form this; but it is not out of place to record two or three.

Abraham, being rich above most men in abundance of gold and silver, and having numerous herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, and being equal in his affluence and abundance to any of the men of the country, or of the original inhabitants, who were the most wealthy, and being, in fact, richer than any sojourner could be expected to be, was never unpopular with any of the people among whom he

* Genesis xviii. 15.

was dwelling, but was continually praised and beloved by all who had any acquaintance with him; and if, as is often the case, any contention or quarrel arose between his servants and retinue and those of others, he always endeavoured to terminate it quietly by his gentle disposition, discarding and driving to a distance from his soul all quarrelsome, and turbulent, and disorderly things. And there is no wonder, if he was such towards strangers, who might have agreed together and with a heavy and powerful hand have repelled him, if he had begun acts of violence, when he behaved with moderation towards those who were nearly related to him in blood, but very far removed from him in disposition, and who were desolate and isolated, and very inferior in wealth to himself, willingly allowing himself to be inferior to them in the very things in which he might have been superior; for there was his brother's son, when he departed from his country, who went forth with him, an inconstant, variable, whimsical man, inclining now to one side and now to another; and at one time caressing him with friendly salutations, and at another, being restive and obstinate, by reason of the inequality of his disposition; on which account his household also was a quarrelsome and turbulent one, as it had no one to correct it, and especially his shepherds were so, because they were removed to a great distance from their master.

Accordingly, they, in their self-willed manner, behaving as if they claimed complete liberty, were always quarrelling with the managers of the flocks of the wise Abraham, who yielded a great many points, because of the gentle disposition of their master; in consequence of which, the shepherds of his nephew turned to folly and to shameless audacity, and gave way to anger, cherishing ill-temper, and exciting a spirit of irreconcilable enmity in their hearts, until they compelled those whom they injured to turn to their own defence; and when a somewhat violent battle had taken place, the good Abraham, hearing of the attack made by his servants on the others, though only in self-defence, and knowing as he did that his own household was superior both in numbers and in power, would not allow the contest to be protracted till victory declared for his party, in order that he might not grieve his nephew by

the defeat of his men; but standing between the two bodies of combatants, he, by his pacific speeches, reconciled the contending parties, and that not only for the moment, but for all future time too; for he knew that if they continued to dwell together, and to abide in the same place, they would be always differing in opinion and quarrelling with one another, and continually raising up quarrels and wars with one another. In order that this might not be the case, he thought it desirable to abandon the custom of dwelling together, and to separate his habitation from that of his nephew. So, sending for his nephew, he gave him the choice of the better country, cheerfully agreeing himself to abandon whatever portion the other selected, as he should thus acquire the greatest of all gains, namely, peace; and yet, what other man would ever have yielded in any point whatever to one weaker than himself, while he was stronger? and who that was able to gain the victory would ever have been willing to be defeated, without availing himself of his power? But this man alone placed the object of his desires, not in strength and superiority, but in a life free from dissension and blessed with tranquillity, as far as depended on himself; for which reason he appears the most admirable of all men.

XXXVIII. Since then this panegyric, if taken literally, is applied to Abraham as a man, and since the disposition of the soul is here intimated, it will be well for us to investigate that also, after the fashion of those men who go from the letter to the spirit of any statement. Now there is an infinite variety of dispositions which arise from different circumstances and opportunities in every kind of action and event; but in this instance, we must distinguish between two characters, one of which is the elder and the other the younger.

Now the elder of the two is that disposition which honours those things which are by nature principal and dominant; the younger is that which regards the things which are subject to others, and which are considered in the lowest rank.

Now the principal and more dominant things are wisdom, and temperance, and justice, and courage, and every descrip-

tion of virtue, and the actions in accordance with virtue; the younger things are wealth, and authority, and glory, and nobility, not real nobility, but that which the multitude think so, and all those other things which belong to the third class, next after the things of the soul, and the things of the body; the class which is in fact the last. Each then of these dispositions has, as it were, flocks and herds. The one which desires external things has for its flock, gold and silver, and all those things which are the materials and furniture of wealth; and, moreover, arms, engines, triremes, armies of infantry and cavalry, and fleets of ships, and all kinds of provisions to procure dominion, by which firm authority is secured.

But the lover of excellence has for his flock the doctrines of each individual virtue, and its speculations respecting wisdom. Moreover, there are overseers and superintendents of each of these flocks, just as there are shepherds to flocks of sheep. Of the flock of external things, the superintendents are those who are fond of money, those who are fond of glory, those who are eager for war, and all those who love authority over multitudes. And the managers of the flock of things concerning the soul are all those who are lovers of virtue and of what is honourable, and who do not prefer spurious good things to genuine ones, but genuine to spurious good. There is therefore a certain natural contest between them, inasmuch as they have no opinions in common with one another, but are always at variance and difference respecting the matter which has of all others the greatest influence in the maintenance of life as it should be, that is to say, the judgment of what things are truly good.

Now, for some time the soul was warred against by some enemy, and was full of this quarrelsome principle, inasmuch as it had not yet been completely pacified, but was still troubled by some passions and diseases which prevailed over sound reason. But from the time when it began to be more powerful, and with its superior force, to destroy the fortification of the opposite opinions, becoming elated and puffed up with pride, it in a most marvellous manner began to separate and detach the disposition in itself, which admires the external materials, and as if conversing

with man, says to him, Thou art unable to dwell with—it is impossible that thou shouldest be connected by alliance with—a lover, of wisdom and virtue. Come, then, and migrating from thy present abode, depart to a distance, since you have no communion with me, and, indeed, cannot possibly have any. For all the things which you conceive to be on the right he imagines to be on the left; and on the contrary, whatever you think is on the left, is looked upon by him as on the right.

XXXIX. Therefore the virtuous man was not only peaceful and a lover of justice, but also a man of courage and of a warlike disposition; not for the sake of making war, for he was not of a contentious and quarrelsome character, but for the sake of a lasting peace for the future, which hitherto his adversaries had destroyed. And the most convincing proof of this is to be found in what he did. Four great kings had received for their inheritance the eastern portion of the inhabited world; and they were obeyed by all the eastern nations, both on this and on the other side of the Euphrates. Now all the other parts remained unharassed by contentions, obeying the commands of these kings, and contributing their yearly taxes and tribute without seeking for any excuses; but the land of the inhabitants of Sodom alone before it was destroyed by fire began to break the peace, having been designing to revolt for a long time.

For as it was a very rich country it was ruled by five kings, who had divided the cities and the land among them, though the district was not an extensive one, but fertile in corn and trees, and abounding in all kinds of fruit. What then their size gives to other cities, that the excellence of its soil gives to Sodom; on which account it had many princes for lovers who admired its beauty. These, on all other occasions, had paid the appointed revenues to the collectors of the taxes, honouring and at the same time fearing those more powerful sovereigns of whom they were the viceroys.

But when they were completely sated with good things, and when, as is ordinarily the case, satiety had begotten insolence, they, cherishing a pride beyond their power! began at first to lift up their heads and to become restive. Then,

like wicked servants, they set upon their masters, trusting more to their factious spirit than to their strength. But their sovereigns, remembering their own nobleness and being fortified with superior power, went against them with great disdain, as if they would be able to defeat them by the mere cry of battle. And having engaged them in battle, they in a moment put some of them to flight, and others they slew in the flight, and so they destroyed their army to a man. And also they led away a vast multitude captive, which they distributed among themselves with much other booty. Moreover, they led away captive the brother's son of the wise Abraham, who had a little while before emigrated into one of the cities of the Pentapolis.

XL. This was communicated to Abraham by some one of those who escaped from the defeat of his countrymen, and it grieved him exceedingly, and he would not be quiet any longer, being much concerned at what had happened, and mourning more for him alive and in captivity than if he had heard that he had been killed. For he knew that death (τελευτή) as its very name imports, was the end (τέλος) of all living beings, and especially of the wicked, and that there are innumerable unexpected evils which lie, as it were, in ambush for the living. But when he was preparing to pursue them for the purpose of delivering his brother's son, he found himself in want of allies, inasmuch as he himself was a stranger and a sojourner and as no one could dare to oppose the irresistible power of such mighty monarchs flushed with recent victory. And he devised for himself a most novel alliance. For necessity is the mother of invention, and expedients are found in the most difficult circumstances when a man has set his heart on just and humane objects. For having collected together all his servants, and ordering the slaves whom he had purchased to remain at home (for he was afraid of desertion on their part), he assembled all his domestic servants, and divided them into centuries, and marched forward in their battalions; not, indeed, trusting to them, for his was still a most insignificant force, in comparison with that of the king's, but placing his confidence in the champion and defender of the just, namely in God.

Therefore putting forth all his exertions he hastened on, in nowise relaxing his speed, until, watching his oppor-

tunity, he fell upon the enemy by night, after they had supped, and when they were just on the point of betaking themselves to sleep. And some he slew in their beds, and those who were arrayed against him he utterly destroyed, and with great vigour he defeated them all, more by the courage of his soul than by the adequacy of his means. And he did not cease from attacking them until he had utterly destroyed the hostile army with their kings, and slain them all to a man in front of their camp, and had brought back his brother's son after this splendid and most glorious victory, bringing back also as fair booty all their cavalry, and all the multitude of their beasts of burden, and a most enormous quantity of spoil.

And when the great high priest of the most high God beheld him returning and coming back loaded with trophies, in safety himself, with all his own force uninjured, for he had not lost one single man of all those who went out with him; marvelling at the greatness of the exploit, and, as was very natural, considering that he had never met with this success but through the favour of the divine wisdom and alliance, he raised his hands to heaven, and honoured him with prayers in his behalf, and offered up sacrifices of thanksgiving for his victory, and splendidly feasted all those who had had a share in the expedition; rejoicing and sympathising with him as if the success had been his own, and in reality it did greatly concern him. For as the proverb says:—

"All that befalls from friends we common call."

And much more are all instances of good fortune common to those whose main object it is to please God.

XLI. These things, then, are what are contained in the plain words of the scriptures. But as many as are able to contemplate the facts related in them in their incorporeal and naked state, living rather in the soul than in the body, will say that of the nine kings the four are the powers of the four passions which exist within us, the passion of pleasure, of desire, of fear, and of grief; and that the other five kings are the outward senses, being equal in number, the

* Genesis xiv. 23.

sense of sight, of hearing, of smell, of taste, and of touch. For these in some degree are sovereigns and rulers, having acquired a certain power over us, but not all to an equal extent; for the five are subordinate to the four, and are compelled to pay them taxes and tribute, such as are appointed by nature. For it is from the things which we see, or hear, or smell, or taste, or touch, that pleasures, and pains, and fears, and desires arise; as there is no one of the passions which has any power to exist of itself, if it were not supplied by the materials furnished by the outward senses.

For it is in these things that their powers consist, either in figures and in colours, or in the faculty of speaking or hearing which depends on the voice, or in flavours, or in odours, or by the subjects of touch, whether they are soft or hard, or rough, or smooth, or hot, or cold. For all these things are supplied to each of the passions by means of the outward senses. And as long as the taxes beforementioned are paid the alliance among the kings remains; but when they are no longer contributed, as they were before, then immediately do quarrels and wars arise. And this appears to happen when painful old age supervenes, in which none of the passions becomes weaker, but rather perhaps stronger than their ancient power; but the sight becomes dim, and the ears hard of hearing, and every one of the other outward senses more blunt, being no longer equally able as before to judge and decide accurately of every subject submitted to them, nor any longer to pay a tribute which will be equal to the number of the passions.

So that it happened very naturally that they being thoroughly exhausted and laid prostrate by them were easily put to flight by the adverse passions; and the statement that follows is in strict consistency with what might be naturally expected, namely, that of the five kings two fell into wells, and three took to flight. For touch and taste reach to the very deepest portions of the body, sending down into the entrails those things which are suitable for digestion; but the eyes, and the ears, and the smell, roaming abroad for the most part, escape the slavery of the body.

The good man—threatening to attack all of these, when he saw that those who had lately been friends and con-

federates were now in a state of disease, and that there was war instead of peace arising among the nine kingdoms, as the four kings were contending with the five for sovereignty and dominion—on a sudden, having watched his opportunity, attacked them; being desirous of the establishment of democracy in the soul, the most excellent of constitutions instead of tyrannies and absolute sovereignties, and wishing also to introduce law and justice instead of lawlessness and injustice, which had prevailed up to that time. And what is here said is not a cunningly devised fable, but is rather one of the most completely true facts, which may be seen to be true in our own selves. For it very often happens that the outward senses observe a sort of confederacy which they have formed with the passions, supplying them with objects perceptible by the outward senses; and very often also, they raise contentions, no longer choosing to pay the tribute fairly due from them, or else being unable to do so, by reason of the presence of corrective reason; which when it has taken up its complete armour, namely, the virtues, and their doctrines and contemplations, which form an irresistible power, conquers all things in the most vigorous manner. For it is not lawful for perishable things to dwell with what is immortal. Therefore the nine sovereignties of the four passions and the five outward senses are both perishable themselves and also the causes of mortality. But the truly sacred and divine word, which uses the virtues as a starting place, being placed in the number ten, that perfect number, when it descends into the contest and exerts that more vigorous power which it has in accordance with God, subdues by main force all the aforesaid powers.

XLII. And at a subsequent period his wife dies, she who was most dear to his mind and most excellent in all respects, having given innumerable proofs of her affection towards her husband in leaving all her relations together with him; and in her unhesitating migration from her own country, and in her continued and uninterrupted wanderings in a foreign land, and in her endurance of want and scarcity, and in her accompanying him in his warlike expeditions. For she was always with him at all times, and in all places, never being absent from any spot, or failing to share any of his fortune, being truly the partner of his life, and of all

the circumstances of his life; judging it right equally to share all his good and evil fortune together with him. For she did not, as some persons do, shun any participation in his misfortunes, but lie in wait only for his prosperity, but with all cheerfulness took her share in both, as was fitting and becoming to a wedded wife.

XLIII. And though I might have many topics for panegyric on this woman, still I will only mention one, which shall be the most manifest possible proof of all the others. For she, being barren and childless, and fearing lest her husband's God-loving house might be left entirely destitute of offspring, came to her husband and spoke as follows:—"We have now lived together a long time mutually pleasing each; but we have no children, which is the cause for which we ourselves came together, and for which also nature designed the original connection between husband and wife; nor indeed can there be any hope of your having any offspring by me, since I am now beyond the age of child-bearing; do not you then suffer for my barrenness, and do not, out of your affection for me, while you are yourself able still to become a father, be hindered from being so. For I shall not feel any jealousy towards another woman whom you may marry, not for the gratification of irrational appetite, but in order to satisfy a necessary law of nature. For which reason I will not delay to deck a new bride for you, that she may fulfil what is wanting on my part. And if the prayers which we will offer up for the birth of children be blessed with success, then the children which are born shall be your own legitimate children, but by adoption they shall be by all means mine.

"And that you may have no suspicion of any jealousy on my part, take, if you will, my own handmaid to wife; who is a slave indeed as to her body, but free and noble as to her mind; whose good qualities I have for a long time proved and experienced from the day when she was first introduced into my house, being an Egyptian by blood, and a Hebrew by deliberate choice. We have great substance and abundant wealth, not like people who are sojourners. For even already we surpass the natives themselves in the brilliancy of our prosperity, but still we have no heir or

successor, and that, too, though there might be one, if you would be guided by my advice."

But Abraham, marvelling more and more at the love of his wife for her husband thus continually being renewed and gaining fresh strength, and also at her spirit of forecast so desirous to provide for the future, takes to himself the handmaid who had been approved by her to the extent of having a son by her; though as those who give the most clear and probable account say he cohabited with her only till she became pregnant; and when she conceived, which she did after no long interval, he then desisted from all connection with her, by reason of his natural continence, and also of the honour in which he held his wife. So then he speedily had a son by this handmaid, but at a very distant period after this he had also a legitimate son, after he and his wife had both despaired of any offspring from one another. The bounteous God having thus bestowed on them a reward for their excellence more perfect than their highest hopes.

XLIV. It is sufficient to mention this as a proof of the virtue of Abraham's wife. But the topics of praise of the wise man himself are more numerous, some of which I have lately enumerated. Moreover I will mention also one circumstance connected with the death of the wife, which ought not to be buried in silence. For when Abraham had lost such a partner of his whole life, as our account has shown her to have been, and as the scriptures testify that she was, he still like a wrestler prevailed over the grief which attacked him and threatened to overwhelm his soul; strengthening and encouraging with great virtue and resolution, reason, the natural adversary of the passions, which indeed he had always taken as a counsellor during the whole of his life; but at this time above all others, he thought fit to be guided by it, when it was giving him the best and most expedient advice. And the advice was this; not to afflict himself beyond all measure, as if he were stricken down with a novel and unprecedented calamity; nor, on the other hand, to give way to indifference, as if nothing had happened calculated to give him sorrow. But rather to choose the middle way in preference to either extreme; and to endeavour to grieve in a moderate degree; not being

indignant at nature for having reclaimed what belonged to her as her due; and bearing what had befallen him with a mild and gentle spirit.

And there are evidences of these assertions to be seen in the holy scriptures; which it is impossible should be convicted of false witness, and they tell us that Abraham, having wept a short time over his wife's body, soon rose up from the corpse; thinking, as it should seem, that to mourn any longer would be inconsistent with that wisdom by which he had been taught that he was not to look upon death as the extinction of the soul, but rather as a separation and disjunction of it from the body, returning back to the region from whence it came; and it came, as is fully shown in the history of the creation of the world, from God.

But just as no man of moderation or sense would be indignant at having to repay a debt to a lender or to return a deposit to the man who had deposited it; so, in the same manner, he did not think it becoming to show impatience when nature reclaimed what belonged to her, but preferred to bear what was inevitable with cheerfulness. And when the magistrates of that country came to sympathise with him in his sorrow, seeing none of the customary signs of woe which were usually exhibited in their land by mourners, no loud wailing or howling, no beating of the breast, no loud cries of men or women, but a steady, sober depression of spirits on the part of the whole household, they marvelled exceedingly, even though they had been previously full of astonishment and admiration at all the rest of the man's way of life. And then, not concealing in their own minds their ideas of the greatness and beauty of his virtue, for it was all admirable, they approached him and addressed him thus:—"Thou art a king from God among us."* Speaking most truly, for all other kingdoms are established by man by means of wars, and military expeditions, and indescribable evils, which those persons who aim at power inflict mutually on one another, slaying one another, and raising up vast forces of infantry, and cavalry, and fleets. But the kingdom of the wise man is bestowed upon him by God; and the virtuous man receiving it is not the cause of evil to any one, but is rather the author to all his subjects of the

* Genesis xxiii. 6.

acquisition and also of the use of good things, proclaiming to them peace and obedience to the law.

XLV. There is also another praise of him recorded in his honour and testified to in the holy scriptures, which Moses has written, in which it is related of him that he believed in God; which is a statement brief indeed in words, but of great magnitude and importance to be confirmed in fact. For on whom else can we believe? Are we to trust in authorities, or in glory and honour, or in abundance of wealth and noble birth, or in good health and a good condition of the senses and mind, or in vigour of body and beauty of person? But in truth every kind of authority is unstable, as it has innumerable enemies lying in wait to attack it. And if in any instance it is firmly established, it is only so confirmed by innumerable evils and calamities which those who are in authority both inflict and suffer. Again, honours and glory are most unstable, being tossed about among the indiscriminate inclinations and feeble language of careless and imprudent men; and even if they endure, their nature is not such as to produce any genuine good. And as for riches and illustrious birth, those things sometimes fall to the lot of the most worthless of men. And even if they should belong only to the virtuous, still they are but the praises of their ancestors and of fortune, and not of those who now possess them.

Nor, again, is it right for a man to pride himself on his personal advantages, in which other animals are superior to him. For what man is stronger or more vigorous than a bull among domestic animals, or than a lion among wild beasts? And what man is more sharp-sighted than a falcon or an eagle? And what man is so richly endowed with the sense of hearing as that stupidest of all animals, the ass? Also what man is more accurate in his sense of smell than a hound, who huntsmen say can trace out by means of his n se animals who are lying at a distance, and can run up to them with perfect correctness, and course, though he has not seen them; for what sight is to other animals that is the sense of smell to hounds and to all the dogs which pursue game.

Moreover, the greater part of the irrational animals enjoy excellent health, and are as far as possible entirely exempt

from disease. And also in any competition in respect of beauty, some things which are even destitute of vitality, appear to me to surpass the elegance of either men or women; as, for instance, images, and statues, and pictures, and in a word all the works of either the pictorial or plastic art which arrive at excellence in either branch, and which are the objects of study and desire both to Greeks and barbarians, who erect them in the most conspicuous places for the ornament of their cities.

XLVI. Therefore, the only real, and true, and lasting good is trust in God, the comfort of life, the fulfilment of all good hopes, the absence of all evils, and the attendant source of blessings, the repudiation of all unhappiness, the recognition of piety, the inheritance of all happiness, the improvement of the soul in every respect, as it thus relies for support on the cause of all things, who is able to do everything but who wills only to do what is best. For as men who are going along a slippery road stumble and fall, but they who proceed by a dry, and level, and plain path, journey on without stumbling; so also those men who are conducting their soul through the road of bodily and external good things are only accustoming it to fall; for these things are full of stumbling and the most insecure of all. But they who by those speculations which are in accordance with virtue, hasten towards God, are guiding their souls in a safe and untroubled path. So that we may say with the most absolute truth, that the man who trusts in the good things of the body disbelieves in God, and that he who distrusts them believes in him.

But not only do the holy scriptures bear witness to the faith of Abraham in the living God, which faith is the queen of all the virtues, but moreover he is the first man whom they speak of as an elder; though there were men who had preceded him who had lived three times as many years (or even more still) as he had, not one of whom is handed down to us as worthy of the appellation. And may we not say that this is in strict accordance with natural truth? For he who is really an elder is looked upon as such, not with reference to his length of time, but to the praiseworthiness of his life. Those men, therefore, who have spent a long life in that existence which is in accordance with the body, apart

from all virtue, we must call only long-lived children, having never been instructed in those branches of education which befit grey hairs. But the man who has been a lover of prudence, and wisdom, and faith in God, one may justly denominate an elder, forming his name by a slight change from the first. For in real truth the wise man is the first man in the human race, being what a pilot is in a ship, a governor in a city, a general in war, the soul in the body, or the mind in the soul; or again, what the heaven is in the world, and what God is in heaven. And God, admiring this man for his faith (πίστις) in him, gives him a pledge (πίστις) in return, namely, a confirmation by an oath of the gifts which he had promised him; no longer conversing with him as God might with man, but as one friend with another.

For he says, "By myself have I sworn,"* by him that is whose word is an oath, in order that Abraham's mind may be established still more firmly and immoveably than before. Let the virtuous man both be and be called the elder and the first, and let every fool be called the younger and the last, since he only pursues such objects as may produce revolution and as are placed in the lowest rank.

Thus much is sufficient to say on this subject. But God, adding to the multitude and magnitude of the praises of the wise man one single thing as a crowning point, says that "this man fulfilled the divine law, and all the commandments of God,"† not having been taught to do so by written books, but in accordance with the unwritten law of his nature, being anxious to obey all healthful and salutary impulses. And what is the duty of man except most firmly to believe those things which God asserts?

Such is the life of the first author and founder of our nation; a man according to the law, as some persons think, but, as my argument has shown, one who is himself the unwritten law and justice of God.

* Genesis xv. 6. † Genesis xxvi. 5.

A TREATISE

OF THE

LIFE OF A MAN OCCUPIED WITH AFFAIRS OF STATE, OR ON JOSEPH.

I. THERE are three different modes by which we proceed towards the most excellent end, namely, instruction, nature, and practice. There are also three persons, the oldest of the wise men who in the account given to us by Moses derive three names from these modes, whose lives I have now discussed, having examined the man who arrived at excellence in consequence of instruction, and him who was self-taught, and him who attained to the proposed end by practice. Accordingly, proceeding in regular order, I will now describe the life of the man occupied in civil affairs. And again, Moses has given us one of the patriachs as deriving his name from this kind of life, in which he had been immersed from his earliest youth.

Now, this man began from the time he was seventeen years of age to be occupied with the consideration of the business of a shepherd, which corresponds to political business. On which account I think it is that the race of poets has been accustomed to call kings the shepherds of the people; for he who is skilful in the business of a shepherd will probably be also a most excellent king, having derived instruction in those matters which are deserving of inferior attention here to superintend a flock of those most excellent of all animals, namely, of men. And just as attention to matters of hunting is indispensable to the man who is about to conduct a war or to govern an army, so in the same manner those who hope to have the government of a city will find the business of a shepherd very closely connected with them, since that is as it were a sort of prelude to any kind of government. Therefore, as this man's father perceived in his son a very noble ability, and too great to be left in the obscurity of a private station, he admired him, and cultivated his talent, and loved him more than his other sons; because, too, he was the son of his old age, which last cause is one of the strongest incentives to affection possible.

And like a man fond of virtue, he cherished and kindled the natural good disposition of his son by excessive and most diligent care and attention, in order that it might not only not be smothered, but might shine forth more brilliantly.

II. But envy is at all times an adversary to great good fortune, and at this time it attacked a house which was prospering in all its parts, and divided it, setting all the brothers in enmity against one, who displayed an ill feeling on their own parts, sufficient to counterbalance the affection of his father, hating their brother as much as their father loved him; but they did not divulge their hatred by words, but kept it in their own bosoms, on which account it very naturally became more grievous and bitter; for passions which are repressed, and which are not allowed to evaporate in language, are more difficult to bear. This man, therefore, indulging a disposition free from all guile and malice, and having no suspicion of the ill will which was secretly cherished against him by his brethren, having seen a dream of favourable import, related it to them, as if they were well affected towards him.

"For," said he, "I thought that the time of harvest was arrived, and that we had all gone down to the plain to gather the crops, and had taken sickles in our hands to reap the harvest, and on a sudden my sheaf appeared to stand up, right, and to be raised up, and to erect itself; and I thought that your sheaves, as if at an appointed signal, ran up and fell down before it, and worshipped it with great earnestness."* But they being men of acute intelligence, and shrewd in divining the nature of a matter thus intimated to them by means of a figure, with very felicitous conjectures, replied, "Dost thou think that thou shalt be king and lord over us? for this is what you are now intimating by this lying vision of yours." So their hatred was kindled against him more exceedingly than before, as it was continually receiving some fresh pretext for its increase. And he, suspecting nothing, a few days afterwards saw another dream, still more astonishing than the former one, and again he related it to his brethren; for he thought that the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars, all came and worshipped him, so that his father marvelling at what had thus hap-

* Genesis xxxvii. 7.

pened, laid these events up in his mind, cherishing them, and considering within himself what was to happen. But he reproved his son gravely, from a fear that he might be doing wrong in some respect, and said to him, "Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren, be able to fall down and worship thee? for by the sun you appear to indicate your father, and by the moon your mother, and by the eleven stars your eleven brethren? Let not such an idea ever come into your mind, O my son. But rather let all recollection of these visions which have appeared to you be forgotten, and let them pass from your mind; for to hope and expect a superiority over those of your family and kindred, is a detestable thing in my opinion, and I think, indeed, in that of every one else, who has any regard for equality and the principles of justice that subsist among kinsmen."

But his father, being afraid lest from his meeting with his brothers there might arise some quarrel and disturbance with them, inasmuch as they bore ill will against him on account of the dreams which he had seen, sent them away to keep their flocks at a distance, but retained him at home till a fitting season, knowing that time is said to be a powerful physician for all the passions and diseases of the soul, and a remover of grief, and an extinguisher of anger, and a healer of fear; for it softens and mitigates everything, even such things as are, according to their own nature, hard to be cured. But when he conjectured that no hatred was any longer abiding in their hearts he sent this his son forth to salute his brethren, and also to bring him word how they and their flocks of sheep were.

III. This expedition of his was the origin both of great evils and also of great good, each of them being excessive beyond all expectation; for he, obeying the commands of his parents, went to visit his brethren; but they, seeing him coming towards them while at a great distance, conversed one with another, saying nothing of good omen, inasmuch as they did not choose even to call him by his name, but called him a dreamer, and a seer of visions, and such appellations as these. And to such a height did they carry their rage that (I will not say all of them, but) the greater portion of them plotted his death; and designed, after having slain him, for the sake of not being detected, to throw him

into a deep pit dug in the earth, for there are a great many such places in that district dug as receptacles for the rain water. And they were very near incurring that most excessive pollution of fratricide, as they would have done if they had not been, though with difficulty, persuaded by the advice of their eldest brother, who counselled them not to meddle with such a pollution but merely to cast him into one of these pits, thinking then to contrive some means of saving him, so that when they had all departed he might send him back again to his father without having suffered any harm. And after they agreed to this he came forward and saluted them; and they took him as though he had been an enemy, and stripped him of all his garments, and let him down into a vast pit, and then, having stained his cloak with the blood of a kid, they sent it to their father on the pretence that he had been slain by a wild beast.

IV. But on that day it happened by some chance that certain merchants who were accustomed to convey their merchandise from Arabia to Egypt were travelling that way, and so the eleven brethren drew Joseph up out of the pit and sold him to them; the one of them who was the fourth in respect of age instigating this contrivance; for in my opinion, he was afraid lest his brother might be treacherously slain by the others, who had conceived an irreconcilable hatred against him, and therefore he proposed that he should be sold, substituting slavery for death, the lighter evil for the greater. But the eldest, for he was not present when he was sold, looking down into the pit, and not seeing him whom he had left there a short time before, cried out and lamented loudly, and rent his clothes, and tossed his hands up and down like a madman, and beat his breast and tore his hair, saying, "What has become of him? Tell me, is he alive, or is he dead? If he is dead, show me his corpse that I may weep over his body, and so alleviate my grief. When I see him lying dead I shall be comforted; for why should we bear ill will to the dead? There is no envy excited against those who are out of sight. And if he is alive, to what country has he departed? Where is he kept? for I am not, as he was, an object of suspicion, so as to be distrusted by you." And when they replied that he had been sold, and when they showed

him the money which they had received for him, he said, "A fine trade, indeed, you have been driving? Let us divide the gain: let us wear crowns of victory after thus rivalling the slave-dealers, and bearing off from them the prizes of iniquity; we may well pride ourselves now that we have surpassed them in barbarity, for they indeed traffic in the liberty of strangers, but we in that of those who are most nearly related to and most dear to us. Surely here is newly contrived a great disgrace and a shame which will be known far and wide. Our fathers left behind them in every part of the world memorials of their virtue and excellence; we shall leave behind us the guilt of a charge of faithlessness and treacherous inhumanity which can never be effaced; for the reputation of extraordinary actions penetrates everywhere; those which are praiseworthy being admired, and those which are blameable meeting with blame and accusation. In what manner now will our father receive the news of what has happened? You will now, as far as depends upon us, have made the life of him who has hitherto been wonderfully happy and fortunate, not worth living; which will he pity, the child who has been sold, for his slavery? or those who have sold him, for their inhumanity? I am sure he will pity us much the most; since to do wrong is a more terrible evil than to suffer wrong, for the one has for an alleviation two consolations of the greatest influence, hope and pity; but the other is destitute of both these mitigations, and is more unfortunate in the judgment of every one. But why do I mourn and bewail in this manner? It is better for me to be silent, lest I too should be treated in some terrible manner; for ye are most merciless men in your dispositions, and implacable; and the rage which was kindled in each of you is still furious and vehement.

V. But when their father heard, not the truth indeed, that his son had been sold, but a falsehood that he was dead, and that he had been slain by wild beasts, he was smitten in his ears by the news that was reported to him, and in his eyes by what was shown to him (for they brought to him his son's coat rent and torn and defiled with quantities of blood); and being wholly bewildered by the exceeding greatness of the calamity, he lay for a long time without

speaking, not being able even to lift up his head, the calamity overwhelming and completely prostrating him; then suddenly pouring forth as it were a stream of tears with bitter lamentations, he bedewed his cheeks, and his chin, and his breast, and all the garments on his chest, saying at the same time such words as these, "It is not thy death that grieves me, O my son, but such a tomb as has fallen to your lot; for if you had been buried in your own land I should have been comforted; I would have cherished you, I would have tended you in sickness if you had died before me, I would have given you my last embrace, I would have closed your eyes, I would have wept over your dead body lying before me, I would have buried you sumptuously, I would have omitted none of the customary observances.

"Again, even if you had died in a foreign land, I should have said, nature has claimed what was due to, and what belonged to her; and therefore, O my mind, be not cast down; for living men have indeed their separate countries, but the whole earth is the grave of the dead; and all men are destined to a speedy death; for even the longest lived man is but short lived if compared with eternity; but if it was necessary that he should die violently and by treachery, it would have been a lighter evil to me for him to have been slain by men, who would have laid out his corpse, and have pitied him so far as to scatter dust over him, and at least to have concealed his body; and even if they had been the most merciless of all people, what more could they have done than have thrown him out unburied, and so got rid of him? And then perhaps, some one of the passers by on the road, standing by, and beholding him, and conceiving pity for our common nature, would have thought him worthy of some care, and of burial; but now, as the saying is, O my son, thou hast become a feast, and a banquet for savage and carnivorous wild beasts, who will eat and devour thy bowels; I am compelled to endure distresses which I never had imagined, I am without any cause practised in enduring many miseries; I am a wanderer, a stranger, a slave, living under compulsion, having even my very life plotted against by those whom it least became to do so. And I have seen many things, and I have heard many

things, and I have suffered many things, all of which have been incurable evils, which however I have learnt to bear with moderation, so as not to yield to them.

"But nothing has ever happened more intolerable than this misfortune which has now befallen me; which has consumed and destroyed all the vigour of my soul; for what can be a greater or more pitiable calamity? The garment of my child has been brought to me, who am his father; but of him himself there is no portion brought, not a limb, not a small fragment, but he has been wholly and entirely destroyed and devoured, not being able even to receive burial; and it seems to me that even his garment would never have been sent to me at all if it had not been by way of a reminder of my grief, and as a refreshment of my memory as to the sufferings which he endured, so as to afflict me with a never to be forgotten and never ending sorrow.

He indeed bewailed his son in these terms; but the merchants sold his son in Egypt to one of the king's eunuchs who was his chief cook.

VI. It is worth while, however, after having thus explained the literal account given to us of these events, to proceed to explain also the figurative meaning concealed under that account; for we say that nearly all, or that at all events, the greater part of the history of the giving of the law is full of allegories; now the disposition which we have at present under consideration, is called by the Hebrews Joseph; but the name being interpreted in the Greek language means, "the addition of the Lord," a name most felicitously given, and most appropriate to the account given of the person so called; for the democratic constitution in vogue among states is an addition of nature which has sovereign authority over everything; for this world is a sort of large state, and has one constitution, and one law, and the word of nature enjoins what one ought to do, and forbids what one ought not to do: but the cities themselves in their several situations are unlimited in number, and enjoy different constitutions, and laws which are not all the same; for there are different customs and established regulations found out and established in different nations; and the cause of this the want of union, and participation existing not merely between the Greeks and the barbarians, or

between the barbarians and the Greeks, but also between the different tribes of each of these respective nations.

Then they, as it would seem, blaming those things which do not deserve blame, such as unexpected occurrences or opportunities, deficiency of crops, badness of soil, their own situation either as being by the sea-side, or inland, or insular, or on the continent, or anything of that sort, are silent as to the real truth. The real truth is their covetousness, their want of good faith towards and confidence in one another, on which account they have not been satisfied with the laws of nature, but have called those regulations, which have appeared to be for the common advantage of the agreeing and unanimous multitudes, laws, so that the individual constitutions do naturally appear rather in the light of additions to the one great general constitution of nature; for the laws of individual cities are additions to the one right reason of nature; and so also the man who is occupied with political affairs is an addition to the man who lives in accordance with nature.

VII. And it is not without a particular and correct meaning that Joseph is said to have had a coat of many colours. For a political constitution is a many-coloured and multiform thing, admitting of an infinite variety of changes in its general appearance, in its affairs, in its moving causes, in the peculiar laws respecting strangers, in numberless differences respecting times and places. For as the master of a ship collects together all the means which may tend to ensure him a favourable voyage with reference to and in dependency on the changes of the wind, not always guiding his vessel in one and the same way; and as a physician does not apply one and the same means of cure to every sick person, nor even to one person if his disease varies in its character, but watches the periods of its abatement, and of its intensity, and of its becoming full or empty, and the alterations of the causes of the sickness, and so varies his remedies as much as possible to secure the safety of his patient, applying one remedy at one time and another at another; in the same manner I conceive that the man immersed in political affairs is of necessity a multiform man, assuming many different appearances, one in time of peace and another in time of war; and a different cha-

racter according as those who are opposed to him are numerous or few in number, withstanding a small number with vigorous resolution, but using persuasion and gentle means towards a large body. And in some cases where there is much danger, still for the sake of the common advantage he will take the place of every one, and manage the business in hand by himself; in other cases, where it is merely a question of labour he will let others minister to him as his assistants.

It was appropriately said that the man was sold. For the haranguer of the people and the demagogue, mounting the tribunal, like slaves who are being sold and exposed to view, is a slave instead of a free man, by reason of the honours which he seems to be receiving, being led away by ten thousand masters? The same person is also represented as having been torn by wild beasts; and vainglory, which lies in wait for a man, is an untameable wild beast, tearing and destroying all who give into it. And they who have been purchasers are likewise sellers; for there is one master only to the citizens who live in any city; but there is a multitude of masters, one succeeding another in a certain succession and regular order. But those who have been sold three times change their masters like bad slaves, not remaining with their original ones, by reason of the speedily satisfied irregularity of their dispositions, always thirsting after novelty.

VIII. This is enough to say on this part of the subject. Accordingly, the young man, having been conducted into Egypt, and there, as has already been stated, having become the slave of a eunuch, gave in a few days such proofs of virtue and excellence of disposition, that he had authority over his fellow servants given to him, and the management of the whole household committed to his charge; for already his master had learnt by many circumstances to perceive that his servant in all his words and in all his actions was under the immediate direction of divine providence. Accordingly, in consequence of this opinion of his purchaser, he was appointed superintendent of his house, apparently indeed by his master, but, in fact and reality, by nature herself, which procured for him the government of a mighty city, and nation, and country. For it was necessary that one who was destined to be a statesman should be previously

practised and trained in the management of a single household; for a household is a city on a small and contracted scale, and the management of a household is a contracted kind of polity; so that a city may be called a large house, and the government of a city a widely spread economy. And from these considerations we may see that the manager of a household and the governor of a state are identical, though the multitude and magnitude of the things committed to their charge may be different, as is the case too with the arts of painting and statuary; for the good statuary or painter, whether he is making many and colossal figures, or only few and those of a small size, is still the same person, and the art which he is practising is the same art.

IX. But while he is earning a very high reputation in the matters connected with the management of his master's house, he is plotted against by the wife of his master, because of the incontinent love which she had conceived for him; for she, being maddened by the beauty of the young man, and being unable to restrain the violence of her frenzy and passion, addressed a proposal of illicit intercourse to him; but he resisted it vigorously, and would not at all endure to approach her, by reason of the orderly and temperate disposition implanted in him by nature and habit. But when she, inflaming and exciting her lawless desire, kept continually tempting him, and continually throwing herself in his way, and continually failing in her object, she at last, in the violence of her passion, had recourse to force, and seizing hold of his cloak dragged him vigorously towards the bed, her passion endowing her strength with greater vigour, as it often does strengthen even the weak. But he, proving more powerful than even the alluring opportunity, uttered a cry becoming a free man, and worthy of his race, saying, What are you forcing me to? We, the descendants of the Hebrews, are guided by special customs and laws of our own; in other nations the youths are permitted, after they are fourteen years of age, to use concubines and prostitutes, and women who make gain by their persons, without restraint. But among us a harlot is not allowed even to live, but death is appointed as a punishment for any one who adopts such a way of life. Therefore, before our lawful marriage we know nothing of any connection with any other woman, but, without ever having experienced any similar cohabitation, we

approach our virgin brides as pure as themselves, proposing as the end of our marriage not pleasure but the offspring of legitimate children.

I therefore, having kept myself pure to this day, will not begin now to transgress the law by adultery which is the greatest of all sins, when I ought rather, even if in past time I had lived in an irregular manner, and had been led away by the impulses of youth, and had imitated the licentiousness of the natives, still not to seek to pollute the marriage of another man, an offence which who is there who would not avenge with blood? For though different nations differ in other points, still all agree in this alone, that all men think him worthy of ten thousand deaths who does so, and give up the man who is detected in adultery without trial to the husband who has detected him. But you, pressing me thus to load myself with guilt, would add even a third pollution in my case, since you bid me not merely commit adultery, but also to violate my mistress and my master's wife, unless, indeed, this is to be looked upon as the reason for which I entered your house, that I might neglect the duties which a servant ought to perform, and get drunk, and become intoxicated with hopes fit for my master who has bought me, polluting his marriage, and his house and his family.

Nevertheless I am induced to honour him not merely as my master, but also as one who has before now been my benefactor. He has committed to my care the whole management of his household; there is nothing whatever, be it great or small, which is withdrawn from my superintendence, except you who are his wife. In return for these kindnesses is it fitting for me to requite him with such an action as you recommend to me? I will rather, as becomes me, endeavour with honourable service to requite the kindness of which he has set me the example, and which is due to him. He, being my master, has made me, who was a captive and a slave, a free man and a citizen by his great goodness, as far at least as depended on him; and shall I, who am a slave, compare myself to my master as if he were a stranger and a captive? And with what disposition can I commit this unholy action? and with what face can I be impudent enough to look upon him? The consciousness of guilt which I shall have contracted will not suffer me to

look him in the face, even if I should be able to be undiscovered, but in fact I shall never escape detection, for there are innumerable witnesses of all the things which are done privily who may not be silent.

I forbear to say that, even if no one else should know it, or being privy to it should not divulge it, still I nevertheless shall be a witness against myself by my complexion, by my look, by my voice, as I said a little while ago, being convicted by my own conscience; and if no one else informs against me, shall I not fear nor respect, justice the assessor of God, and the overlooker of all human actions?

X. He put all these arguments together and philosophised in this way till she ceased to importune him; for the desires are powerful, to cast in the shade even the most powerful of the outward senses, which he, being aware of, fled from them, leaving his garment in her hands, as she had seized hold of him. This circumstance gave her an opportunity to contrive a story, and to invent a plausible tale against the young man, by means of which she might revenge herself on him; for when her husband came from the public assembly, she, pretending to play the part of a modest and orderly woman, even among the intemperate habits by which she was surrounded, said to him, with excessive indignation, "You brought a servant into us, a slave of the Hebrews, who has not only corrupted his soul, since you, in a simple manner without due inquiry, committed your household to him, but has even dared to assault my body. For he was not contented with seducing only his fellow servants, inasmuch as he has become a most lascivious and debauched man, but he has attempted to defile even me, his mistress, and to use force to me; and the proofs of his insane lust are visible and clear; for when, having been very ill-treated by him, I cried out, calling to my aid assistants from within; he fled, from fear of being apprehended."

And showing his garment, she appeared to give a proof of the truth of what she said; and his master thinking that it was true, ordered his officers to conduct the man to prison, erring in two most important points: first, that without giving him any time to defend himself, he, without a trial, condemned one who had done no wrong, as if he had committed the greatest crimes; secondly, because the garment

which the woman displayed as having been left behind by the young man, was indeed a proof of violence, but not of that which he had committed, but rather of that which had been offered to him, and of the fortitude with which he endured it from the woman: for if he had been offering violence, it was probable that he might have laid hold of the garment of his mistress; but it was owing to his having had violence offered to him that he was deprived of his own. But perhaps he should be pardoned for his excessive ignorance, inasmuch as he lived chiefly in the cook's house, being filled with blood, and smoke, and ashes, his reasoning having no opportunity to become tranquillised and to enjoy leisure in itself, because it was confused still more, or, at all events, not less than the body.

XI. I have already sketched out three characters of the man immersed in civil business; that of him who is occupied as a shepherd, that of the regulator of a house, and that of the man possessed of fortitude: and we have now discussed the two first of these sufficiently.

But the temperate man is no less connected with the regulation of political affairs than those two are; for temperance is a beneficial and saving thing for all the affairs of life; and in affairs of state it is most especially so, as those who wish to understand the matter may learn from numerous and easily obtained proofs. For who is there who does not know that great calamities have befallen nations, and districts, and whole countries all over the world, both by land and sea, in consequence of intemperance; for the most numerous and most serious wars have been kindled on account of love, and adultery, and the wiles of women; by which the most numerous and most excellent portion both of the Grecian and barbarian race has been destroyed, and the youth of the cities has perished. And of the consequences of intemperance, are domestic seditions, and wars, and evils upon evils in unutterable number. It is plain that the consequences of temperance, are stability, and peace, and the acquisition and enjoyment of perfect blessings.

XII. It is worth while, however, to proceed in regular order, and by this course to exhibit what is intended to be intimated by this figurative history. The man who brought

this servant of whom we are speaking is said to have been a eunuch; very naturally, for the multitude which purchases the services of a man skilful in affairs of state is truly a eunuch, having in appearance, indeed, the organs of generation, but being deprived of all the power requisite for generating; just as those persons who have a confused sight though they have eyes, are nevertheless deprived of the active use of them, inasmuch as they are not able to see clearly. What, then, is the resemblance of eunuchs to the multitude? That the multitude too is unable to generate wisdom, but that it studies virtue; for when a multitude of men, brought promiscuously together from all quarters and of different races, meets in the same place, what is said indeed may be proper and becoming, but what is intended and what is done is quite the contrary; since the multitude embraces what is spurious in preference to what is genuine, because it is carried away by false opinion, and has not studied what is truly honourable.

On which account (though it seems a most unnatural thing), a wife is represented as cohabiting with this eunuch; for the multitudes court desire, as a man courts a woman; for the sake of which it says and does everything, making it its counsellor in everything which should and should not be spoken, trifling or important, being not at all accustomed to attend to considerations of calm wisdom; therefore the sacred historian very appropriately calls him the chief cook. For as a cook studies nothing beyond the insatiable and immoderate pleasures of the belly, in the same manner the multitude, which is occupied with public affairs, studies only those pleasures and allurements which are conveyed by means of the hearing, by which the energies of the mind are relaxed, as one may say the nerves of the soul are in a manner loosened.

And who is there who is not aware of the great quarrel which exists between physicians and cooks; since the first exert all their diligence and ingenuity in preparing things which are salutary, even if they are not pleasant; but the others, on the contrary, prepare only what is pleasant, disregarding what is advantageous? Therefore, the laws which exist among a people and those who govern in accordance with the laws resemble physicians, and so also do those *counsellors* and judges who have a regard to the common

safety and security of the state, and who use no flattery to the people. But the chief body of the younger men resembles cooks; for their object is not to supply what will be beneficial to the people, but only to contrive for the present moment to reap gratification.

XIII. And the desire of the multitude, like an incontinent woman, loves the man who is experienced in state affairs, and says to him: Go forth, my good man, unto the multitude among which you are dwelling, and forget all your own individual disposition, and the pursuits, and discourses, and actions in which you have been brought up. And be guided by me, and attend to me, and do every thing which is agreeable to me; for I cannot endure any thing that is austere and obstinate, and foolishly fond of truth, and pertinaciously adhering to justice, which puts on an air of importance and dignity on all occasions, which yields in no point, and never proposes to itself any object but plain expediency, without any thought of gratifying the hearers. And you do not know the innumerable calumnies which some persons load you with, uttering them to my husband and your master, the multitude; for up to this time you appear to me to have been behaving like a free man, and you seem not at all to know that you are the slave of a very tyrannical master.

But if you had understood that independence of action belongs to a free man, but obedience to the orders of others to a slave, you would then, laying aside your self-willed obstinacy, have learnt to look upon me who am his wife, being desire, and to do every thing with a reference to my gratification, by which means you yourself also will receive the greatest pleasure.

XIV. But the statesman is not in reality ignorant that the people has the authority of a master, but still he will not admit that he himself is its slave, but looks upon himself as free, and as entitled to consider mainly the gratification of the soul. And he will say in plain words: I have not learnt to be a slave to the will of the populace, nor will I ever study such a practice, but being desirous to attain to the government and administration of the city like a good steward or well-intentioned father, I will save it in a guileless and honourable manner, without any hostile character.

And while I cherish these sentiments I shall be open to examination, concealing nothing, and not hiding any thing like a thief, but keeping my conscience clear as in the light of the sun and of day; for the truth is the light.

And I shall fear none of the evils with which they menace me, not even if they threaten me with death; for hypocrisy is in my eyes a more grievous evil than death. And why should I encounter what I look upon in such a light? For even if the populace be a despot, am I therefore a slave, I who am born of as noble ancestors as any one in the world, entitled to be enrolled as a free citizen in the greatest and most admirable state in this whole world? For as I am not influenced by gifts, nor by exhortations, nor by a love of honours, nor by a desire of power, nor by insolence, nor by a desire of seeming different from what I am, nor by intemperance, nor by cowardice, nor by injustice, nor by any other motive partaking of either passion or wickedness; what can, then, be the dominion of which I have need to fear? Surely it can only be the dominion of men. But they claim authority, indeed, over my body, but none at all over me; for I estimate myself by the more excellent part of myself, namely, by the mind in accordance with which I have determined to live, thinking but little of my mortal body, which sticks to me like a limpet, and even if it is injured by something or other, I shall not be grieved at having got rid of cruel masters and mistresses who are settled within, inasmuch as I shall have escaped the most formidable necessity.

If, therefore, it shall be necessary for me to act as a judge, I will decide, neither adhering to any rich man for the sake of his riches, nor gratifying a poor man by reason of my compassion for his misfortunes, but putting out of sight the rank and outward circumstances of those respecting whom I am to judge, I will honestly pronounce in favour of what shall appear to me to be just. And if I am called to counsel I will bring forward such opinions as shall appear to me to be for the common advantage, even though they may not be palatable. And if I am a member of the assembly, leaving flattering speeches to others, I will adopt only such as are advantageous and salutary, reproving, admonishing, correcting, and studying not a frantic and insane license of speech, *but a sober freedom.*

And if any one dislikes improvement, let such a one find fault with parents, and guardians, and teachers, and with all who have the care of youth, because they reprove their own children, or their orphan wards, or their pupils, and sometimes even beat them; and yet they are not to be accused of evil speaking, nor of insolent violence, but on the contrary, they must be looked upon as friends and real well-wishers; for it would be utterly unworthy for me who am experienced in affairs of state, and who have all the interests of the people entrusted to me in discussions respecting what is for the advantage of the commonwealth to behave worse than a man would who has studied the art of a physician; for he would not in the least regard the brilliant position or the accredited good fortune of his patient, nor whether he is of noble birth or of large fortune, nor whether he is the most renowned monarch or tyrant of all his contemporaries, but would attend to one object alone, that, namely, of preserving his health to the best of his power. And if it should be necessary to use excision or cautery, he, though a subject, or as some might say a slave, would cut or burn his governor or his master.

But I, who have got for my patient not one man but a whole city sick with those more grievous diseases which the kindred desires have brought upon it, what ought I to do? Shall I, abandoning all idea of what will be of general advantage to the whole state seek to please the ears of this or that man with an ungentleman-like and thoroughly slavish flattery? I would rather choose to die than to speak merely with the object of gratifying the ear, and to conceal the truth, disregarding all thought of what is really advantageous. "Now then," as the tragedian says:

> "Now then let fire, let biting steel come on;
> Burn, scorch my flesh, and glut your appetite
> Drinking my dark, warm blood; for here I swear
> Sooner shall those bright stars which deck the heaven
> Descend beneath the earth, the earth itself
> Soar upwards to the sky, than servile words
> Of flattery creep from out my mouth to thee."

But the people, when it is the master, cannot endure a statesman of so masculine a spirit, and one who keeps so completely aloof from the passions, from pleasure, from fear,

from grief, from desire; but it arrests its well-wisher and friend, and punishes him as an enemy, in doing which it first of all inflicts upon itself the most grievous of all punishments, namely, ignorance; in consequence of which state it does not itself learn that lesson which is the most beautiful and profitable of all, namely, obedience to its governor, from which the knowledge how to govern subsequently springs.

XV. Having now discussed this matter at sufficient length, let us see what follows next.

The young man, having been calumniated to his master by his master's wife, who was in love with him, and who had invented against him the accusation to which she herself was liable, is not allowed to make any defence, but is led away to prison. And while he was in the prison he displayed such exceeding virtue that even the most abandoned persons there marvelled and were amazed, and looked upon it as an alleviation of their calamities to have found such a man as the averter of evil from them. And of the cruelty and inhumanity of which gaolers are full there is no one who is ignorant. For they are both by nature pitiless, and also by constant practice they are made more and more brutal, and increase in ferocity day by day, never seeing, or saying, or doing any good thing, but committing only acts of violence and barbarity. For as men who have very strongly knit bodies, when besides their natural strength they add to it the practice of wrestlers, become stronger still, and acquire an irresistible power and a surpassing perfection of body, so in the same manner when an untameable and implacable nature adds habit to its natural ferocity, it becomes inaccessible to, and immovable by any kind of pity or any single respectable or humane feeling.

And as those who associate with good men are improved in their disposition by such association, rejoicing in the pleasant and good persons with whom they are living; so also do they who are living with the wicked take the impression of their wicked ways; for habit is a very powerful thing to put a force upon nature, and to make it resemble itself: now keepers of prisons live among thieves and robbers, and housebreakers, and men of insolence and violence, and murderers, and adulterers, and plunderers of temples, from every one of whom they contract some wickedness, and collect a sort of contribution; and from their

manifold mixture, make up one thoroughly confused and wholly polluted iniquity.

XVI. Nevertheless, even such a man as this was propitiated by the virtue of this young man, and not only gave him liberty and security, but even entrusted to him a share of authority over all the prisoners; so that in word, indeed, and as far as the title went, he continued to be the goaler; but in reality he had made over all the active part of the work to the young man, in consequence of which conduct of his the prisoners were benefited in no slight degree. Accordingly they no longer thought fit to call the place a prison, but a house of correction: for instead of tortures and punishments which they had previously undergone night and day, being beaten and bound with chains, and suffering every imaginable kind of ill-treatment; they were now admonished with the language and doctrines of philosophy, and also by the life and conduct of their teacher, which was more effective than any discourse in the world; for he, by placing his own life full of temperance and every kind of virtue before them, as a picture and well-constructed model of virtue, changed even those who had appeared to be utterly incurable, so that the long diseases of their souls now got a respite, since they were afflicting themselves for what they had hitherto done, and were repenting of it, and uttering such expressions as these, "Where was there all this good formerly which we originally failed to find? For behold! now it shines forth to such a degree that we are ashamed to face it, seeing our deformity in it as in a looking-glass."

XVII. While they then were being improved in this manner two of the king's eunuchs are brought into the prison; the one being his chief butler, and the other his chief baker, having been accused and condemned for malversation in the offices committed to their charge. And Joseph took the same care of them that he took of the others, praying that he might be able to make all those who were entrusted to his care in no respect inferior to irreproachable persons. And when no long period had elapsed, he went to visit his prisoners on one occasion, when he saw these eunuchs more full of perplexity, and more downcast than they had been before; and conjecturing from their excessive grief that some strange event had befallen them, he inquired the reason of their sorrow. And when they answered him, that

they were full of distress and perplexity because they had seen dreams, and because there was no one who could interpret them to them, he said "Be of good cheer, and relate them to me; for so, if God will, you shall be led to understand them; for he is willing to reveal, to those who are desirous of the truth, those things which are concealed in darkness."

Then the chief butler spoke first, and said, "I thought that a great vine grew up, having three roots, and one very vigorous trunk, and flourishing, and bearing bunches of grapes as if in the height of autumn, and when the grapes became dark and ripe I picked the bunches, and squeezed the grapes into the king's cup, in order to convey to my sovereign a sufficient quantity of unmixed wine." And Joseph, pausing for awhile, said, "Thy vision announces good fortune to thee, and a recovery of thy former situation; for the three roots of the vine signify figuratively three days, after which the king will remember thee, and will send for thee from hence, and will pardon thee, and will permit thee to resume thy former rank, and shalt again pour him out wine for confirmation of thy authority, and shalt give the cup into thy master's hand." And the chief butler rejoiced when he heard these things.

XVIII. And the chief baker, gladly receiving this interpretation, and rejoicing in the idea that he too had seen a favourable dream (though his dream was of a very contrary character), being deceived by the fair hopes which were held out to the other, spoke as follows:—"And I, too, fancied that I was carrying a basket, and that I was holding three baskets full of cakes upon my head. And the upper basket was full of all sorts of cakes which the king was accustomed to eat; and there were in it confections and delicacies of all kinds imaginable for the king's food: and the birds flew down and took them from off my head, and devoured them insatiably till they had eaten them all up; and none of the things which I had so skilfully prepared were left." But Joseph replied, "I wish that the vision had not appeared to you, or that, having appeared, it had been concealed in silence; or that, if any one would speak of it, he had done so at a distance, so that I might not have heard him, and that his account had been given out of the reach of my ears, for I disliked to be a messenger of evil; for I summo-

thise with those who are in distress, being greatly grieved at what befalls them by reason of my own humanity. But since interpreters of dreams are bound to speak the truth, since they are interpreters of the divine oracles, and prophets of the divine will, I will explain your dream to you, and conceal nothing; for to speak truly is in every case the best thing, and is, moreover, the most holy of all holy speeches.

"The three baskets are a symbol of three days: and after three days the king will command you to be crucified, and your head to be cut off, and the birds will fly down and feast upon your flesh, until you are wholly devoured." And the chief baker, as was natural, was confused at this, and cast down greatly, expecting the fate which was thus denounced against him, and being full of misery in his mind. But when the three days had passed, the king's birth-day came, on which all the natives of the country made an assembly and a feast, and especially those in the king's palace. Therefore, while the magistrates were feasting, and while all the household and all the servants were revelling as in a public banquet, the king, remembering his eunuchs who were in prison, commanded them to be brought; and when he had seen them he confirmed the interpretation of their dreams which Joseph had given, ordering one of them to be crucified, and to have his head cut off, and restoring to the other the office which he had formerly enjoyed.

XIX. But the chief butler, after he was released, forgot him who had foretold his release to him, and who had alleviated all the misfortunes which had befallen him, perhaps, indeed, because every ungrateful man is forgetful of benefits, and perhaps, too, because of the providence of God, who designed that the prosperity of the young man should not be owing to man, but rather to himself; for after two years he, by means of a dream, and by two visions, predicted to the king the good and evil which was about to happen to his land, each of the visions indicating the same thing, so as to produce a firmer belief in them.

For he thought that seven oxen were coming slowly up out of the river, fat and very well fleshed, beautiful to look upon, and that they began to feed by the river; after which seven others, equal in number, destitute of flesh in a strange degree, and very lean, came up, exceedingly ill-favoured, and

they too fed alongside of the others. Then, on a sudden, the better oxen were devoured by the inferior ones, and yet those who ate them were in none, not even in the very slightest degree, increased in bulk in their bodies, but were still leaner than before, or, at all events, not less lean; and when he had awakened and gone to sleep a second time, he had a second vision appear to him; for he thought that seven ears of wheat sprang up from one root, equal in magnitude, and that they grew and flourished, and rose up to a height with great vigour; and then that seven other ears, thin and weak, grew up near them, and the root with good ears was devoured by the weak ears when they too had grown up. Seeing this sight he remained sleepless all the rest of the night, for cares stinging and wounding him kept him awake, and at dawn he sent for the sophists and related his dream; and as none of them was able, by any probable conjectures, to trace out the truth, the chief butler came forward and said, "O master, there is a hope that you may find the man whom you are seeking; for when I and the chief baker had done evil against you you ordered us to be committed to prison; and in that prison there was a servant of the chief cook, a Hebrew, to whom both the chief baker and I related some dreams which had appeared to us, and he answered them with such felicity and accuracy of interpretation, that all that he foretold to either of us came to pass, the punishment to the chief baker, which was appointed to him, and I found you favourable and merciful to me.

XX. Therefore the king hearing these things, orders men to go in haste and summon the young man before him; but they having cut his hair, for the hair, both of his head and of his beard, had grown very long while he was kept in prison, and having given him a splendid garment instead of a sordid one, and having adorned him in other ways, led him before the king; who, perceiving from his appearance that he was a free-born and noble man (for there are certain outward characteristics which are stamped upon the persons of some people whom one sees, which are not visible to all, but only to such as have very clear-sighted eyes in their mind), said, "My soul forebodes that my dreams will not be altogether permanently hidden in uncertainty; for this *young man* exhibits an appearance of wisdom, by which he

will be able to reveal the truth, and, as it were, dissipate the darkness by light, and the ignorance of the sophists at our court by his knowledge," "And then he related to him his dream.

But Joseph, without being at all dismayed at the rank and majesty of the speaker, conversed with him rather as a king with a subject than like a subject with a king, using freedom of speech, though mingled with respect, and he said: God has shown you before what he is about to do in your country. Do not imagine that the two visions which have appeared to thee are two different dreams; they are but one and the reduplication of them is not superfluous, but is intended to produce the conviction of a firmer belief; for the seven fat oxen, and the seven flourishing and vigorous ears of corn, show seven years of great fertility and plenty; and the seven lean and ill-favoured oxen which came up after the fat ones, and the seven withered and shrivelled ears of corn, denote seven other years of famine; therefore the first period of seven years thus denoted will arrive first, having great and abundant fertility of crops, in which the river will every year overflow all the land of Egypt with inundations, and all the plains, as if they had never been irrigated or fertilised before.

And after these years there will come a period of seven years entirely contrary to them bringing with it a terrible want and scarcity of necessary things, during which time the river will not overflow, nor will the earth be fertilised, so that it will forget its former prosperity, and so that all that was left from the former abundance of the crops will be consumed.

This then is the interpretation of the dreams which have appeared to you. But there is something divine which prompts me and communicates some suggestions to me which may be salutary in this disease; and the most terrible disease of all cities and countries is famine, which must be checked or mitigated to some degree that it may not be so exceedingly strong as to devour the inhabitants; how then can it be mitigated? That which shall be more than sufficient of the crop in the seven years, during which the plenty lasts, after having taken so much as is adequate to the nourishment of the people, and that will be perhaps a fifth part, must be stored up in granaries in the cities

and villages, not removing the crops to any great distance, but storing them in the countries to which they belong, and keeping them there for the relief of the people who dwell in each district; and it will be well to bring together the crop with the sheaves, not thrashing it out, nor winnowing, nor sifting it at all, for four reasons.

First of all, because if it is thus protected by the straw it will remain uninjured a longer time; secondly, in order that every year the people may be reminded of the former period of plenty while they are threshing and winnowing; for the imitation of the former real blessings is calculated to produce a second pleasure; thirdly, in order to prevent any exact calculation of the quantity stored up, as, while the crop is in the ear and in the sheaf, it is of uncertain amount and not easily to be described; that so the hearts of the people of the land may not faint beforehand at the consumption of what has been treasured up, but may use with cheerfulness the nourishment of the corn which is thus provided for them, (for hope is of all things the most strengthening), and so may to a certain extent feel relief in the bitter disease of scarcity; fourthly, because in this way fodder may also be provided for the cattle, as the straw and the chaff derived from the threshing of the wheat will be of use to them in this way.

And you must appoint a man to superintend all these measures, of great prudence, and great acuteness, and well approved in all matters, who may be able without incurring hatred or envy to do all that I have here described in a proper manner, without giving to the multitude any reason to suspect the impending famine; for it would be a sad thing for them to anticipate their distress, and so to faint in their souls through despair; and if any one should inquire the reason of all this being done, the superintendent may say that, as in peace it is right to provide things that may be necessary in war, so also it is desirable in years of plenty to provide against want; and that wars and famines are in their nature uncertain, and in short so are all the different events which befall men unexpectedly at different times; for which therefore it is necessary to be prepared; and not when such things have befallen one, then to seek a remedy when it is no longer of any avail."

XXI. And when the king had heard these words, and had

seen that the interpretation of the dreams did thus with felicity and accuracy of conjecture arrive at the truth, and that the advice which the young man gave appeared to be of exceeding use in the way of providing against the uncertainty of the future, he ordered those who were about him to approach nearer so that they might hear what he said; and then he spoke as follows: Can we, O men, find any man equal to this man who has the spirit of God resting on him? And when they all praised his words, and raised their voices in accordance with them, he looked on Joseph as he was standing before him and said: The man whom you advise me to seek out is near at hand; the wise and intelligent man whom we have need of is at no great distance; you yourself are he whom, in accordance with your recommendation, we ought to seek for, for you do not appear to me to have been inspired by anything short of God himself, when you said what you have now said to me. Go then, and take the superintendence of my household and the government of all Egypt; and no one will blame my indifference or easiness, as if I were yielding to indolence and selfish love of ease, under this calamity so difficult to be remedied; for great natures are often tested without requiring a long time for their examination, compelling men by their intrinsic weight and power to be rapid, and to discard all delay in receiving them, and some affairs do not admit of any delay or procrastination when the occasions compel us to necessary promptness of action.

After speaking thus, Pharaoh appointed Joseph his lieutenant in the kingdom, or rather, if one is to speak the exact truth, actual king, leaving to himself only the name of kingly power; but in reality yielding up the whole sovereignty to him, and behaving in every respect so as to confer honour on the young man. Therefore he gave him a royal seal, and a sacred robe, and a golden circlet to go round his neck, and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had, and commanded him in that state to go round the city, a herald also going round with him, and announcing his appointment to those who were ignorant of it. Moreover, he changed his name with reference to his interpretation of dreams, giving him an appellation according to the language of the country, and he gave him for his wife the most

beautiful and noble of all the women in Egypt, the daughter of the priest of the sun.

These things happened when Joseph was about thirty years of age. And such is the end of pious persons; for, even if they stumble they do not wholly fall, but rise again after an interval, and are re-established in a firm and solid manner, so as not to be completely prostrated. For who would ever have expected that in one day the same man would become a master from having been a slave, and from having been a prisoner would rise up the most illustrious of men, and that the under turnkey of the keeper of the prison would become the king's lieutenant, and that he would dwell in the king's palace instead of in the gaol, having the highest honour in the whole land instead of being held in the greatest disrepute? Nevertheless these things really did come to pass, and similar things often will come to pass when it seems good to God. Only let there be one single spark of excellence and virtue implanted in the soul, and that must some day or other be fanned into a flame and shine forth.

XXII. But since we have proposed to ourselves to give not only an explanation of the literal account given to us, but also of its more figurative meaning, we must say what is necessary to be said concerning that also. Perhaps now some persons of rash and inconsiderate dispositions will laugh; nevertheless, I will speak without concealing anything. And I will say that the statesman is at all times an interpreter of dreams, not classing him by this statement among the charlatans and vain chatterers, and men who put forth sophistical pretences by way of making money, or among those who profess the explanation of visions which have appeared to persons in their sleep in the hope of acquiring gain; but I mean that the statesman is accustomed to interpret accurately the great, and common, and universal general dreams, not only of sleeping but also of waking persons.

And this dream, to speak the truth, is the life of man; for as in the visions which appear to us in sleep, which seeing we do not see, and hearing we do not hear, and tasting and touching we do not either taste or touch, and speaking we do not speak, and walking we do not walk, and while appearing to exert other motions or to win other positions we are not in reality in any such motions or positions; but they

are mere empty fancies without any truth in them of the mind which fancies to itself a sketch, and makes to itself a representation of things which are not, as if they were; and in like manner the fancies which occur to waking people resemble the dreams of sleepers. They have come, they have departed; they have appeared, they have disappeared; before they could be scarcely comprehended they have flown away. And let every one who dreams in this way inquire within himself and he will find a proof of these things within, and without any proofs from me he will know the truth of what I say, especially if he happens to be at all an old man. He was at one time an infant, and after that a child, and then a boy, and then a youth, and subsequently a young man, and then a man, and last of all an old man, but he was not all these things at the same time. Did not the infant disappear before the child, and the child before the boy, and the boy before the youth, and the youth before the young man, and the young man before the full-grown man, and the man in the prime of life before the old man? and did not old age disappear in death? Perhaps, also, every one of the different ages of life yields in vigour to the one which comes next to it, and so dies before its time, nature by these means teaching us not to fear the death which comes upon all men, inasmuch as we have found it easy to bear the previous deaths, the death that is of the infant, and that of the child, and that of the boy, and that of the youth, and that of the young man, and that of the full grown man, not one of whom exist any longer when old age has arrived.

XXIII. And are not all the other things, relating to the body, dreams? Is not beauty an ephemeral thing, wasting away almost before it comes to its prime? And is not health an unsure thing by reason of the weaknesses which lie in wait to upset it? Again, is not strength a thing easily destroyed by diseases arising from innumerable causes? and is not the accuracy of all our outward senses easily overturned by the entrance of any vicious humour? As to external things, who is there who is ignorant of the uncertainty of them? In one day vast riches have often come absolutely to nothing? Numbers of persons who have been of the highest consideration, and who have enjoyed the highest honours that the earth affords, have come into disre-

pute from causes which they neglected or despised. The most mighty powers and authority of kings have been overthrown, and have disappeared in a very brief moment of time.

There is an example to testify to the truth of my argument in Dionysius, who lived at Corinth, who had been tyrant of Sicily, and who, after he was expelled from his dominions, took refuge in Corinth; and though he had been so mighty a sovereign, became a schoolmaster. There is another witness to the same point in Crœsus, the king of Lydia, the wealthiest of all monarchs, who, having conceived the hope of destroying the kingdom of the Persians, not only lost all his men, but was taken prisoner, and was at the point of being burnt alive. And there are witnesses of dreams not only among men, but also among cities, and nations, and countries; Greece is such, and the region of the barbarians, and inhabitants of continents, and islanders, and Europe and Asia, and the west, and the east; for absolutely nothing whatever has ever remained in its original condition; but everything has in every particular been subject to change. Egypt had once the supreme authority over many nations, but now it is a slave. The Macedonians at one time were so flourishing and powerful that they had obtained the supreme dominion over the whole world; but now they pay yearly tribute, which is levied on them by their masters, to the collectors of the revenue.

Where is the house of the Ptolemies, and the glory of all the individual successors of Alexander which at one time shone over all the bounds both of earth and sea? Where is the liberty of so many independent nations and cities? On the other hand, where is the slavery of those which were subject to them? Did not the Persians at one time reign over the Parthians? and do not the Parthians now, through the changes of human affairs, and through the extraordinary and total alterations which are continually taking place, rule over the Persians? Some persons flatter themselves with ideas of long and interminable prosperity; but they find that their good fortune is only the beginning of great calamities; and hastening forward as if to an inheritance of good things, they find instead, terrible reverses; and on the contrary it has often happened, that when they have expected evil fortune they have met with good.

Athletes, who have prided themselves on their personal good condition, and power, and vigour of body, and who have hoped to obtain an indisputable victory, have often been either refused permission to contend for the prize at all, not having been approved of, or else, after they have descended into the arena, they have been defeated; while others who have despaired of arriving even at the second honours, have been crowned with the garland of victory, and have carried off the first prize.

Again, some persons setting sail in the summer (for that is the season for fair voyages) have been shipwrecked; while others, who have expected to be overwhelmed by reason of being forced to put to sea, have reached their harbour uninjured, without having even incurred any danger. As some merchants hasten forward as if to confessed gain, being ignorant of the losses which are awaiting them; while others who have anticipated losses, have in effect met with great profits—so very uncertain is fortune on either side, whether for good or evil; and human affairs are as it were, weighed in a scale, being lightened or depressed according as the weights in each scale are unequal. And a terrible indistinctness and dense darkness is spread over human affairs. And we wander about as if in a deep sleep, without being able to arrive at anything with perfect accuracy of reasoning, or to seize hold of anything with a firm and retentive grasp; for all things are like shadows and phantoms.

And as in processions, what comes first passes by quickly and escapes the sight; and as in torrents, the stream which is hurried by outruns, by its swiftness and rapidity, the comprehension of man, so likewise do the affairs of life, being rapidly borne onwards, and passing by swiftly, appear indeed, to be stationary, but in fact, do not stand still a moment, but are continually being dragged onwards. And men awake too, who, as far as the uncertain character of their comprehensions goes, are in no respect different from people asleep, deceiving themselves, think themselves competent to contemplate the nature of things with reasoning powers which cannot err; in whose case every one of their external senses is a hindrance to knowledge, being hurried by spectacles, and by peculiarities of flavours or odours, to which they incline, and by which they are perverted, and in

consequence of which they prevent any part of the soul from being in a sound state, and from advancing without stumbling as if along a level road. And humble pride, and great littleness, and all other similar states which are made up of inequality and anomaly, compel men to walk in a sort of giddiness, and create great dizziness and perplexity.

XXIV. Since, then, life is full of all this irregularity, and confusion, and indistinctness, it is necessary that the statesman as well as the philosopher should approach the science of the interpretation of dreams, so as to understand the dreams and visions which appear by day to people who believe themselves to be awake, being guided by probable conjectures and rational probabilities, and in this way he must explain each separate one, and show that such and such a thing is honourable, another disgraceful, that this is good or that is bad; that this thing is just, that thing is on the contrary unjust; and so on in the same way with respect to prudence, and courage, and piety, and holiness, and expediency, and usefulness; and in like manner of the opposite things, with respect to what was not useful nor reasonable, what was ignoble, impious, unholy, inexpedient, pernicious, and selfish.

Moreover, he warns you in this way: is this something belonging to another? do not covet it. Is it your own? use it as not using it. Have you great abundance? share it with others; for the beauty of riches is not in the purse, but in the power it gives one to succour those who are in need. Have you but little? do not envy those who have much; no one will pity a poor man who is always envious. Are you in high reputation, and are you held in much honour? be not insolent on that account. Are you lowly in your fortunes? still let not your spirit be depressed. Does everything succeed with you according to your wish? fear a change. Do you often stumble? hope for good fortune hereafter; for the changes of human affairs are apt to be in a direction opposite to the course they have formerly taken.

The moon and the sun, indeed, and the whole of the heaven has clearness bright and distinct, inasmuch as all things are alike which exist permanently in the heaven; and as they are all measured by the rules of truth itself, in harmonious order and in the most admirable agreement. But

as for earthly things, which are full of great disorder and confusion, they are inharmonious and discordant, to speak with perfect correctness, so that dense darkness has overtaken some of them, while others resemble the most brilliant light, or rather they are themselves the clearest and purest of light.

If, therefore, any one should wish to look closely into the nature of things, he will find that heaven is everlasting day, free from all participation in night or in any kind of shade, inasmuch as it is surrounded uninterruptedly by a brilliant display of inextinguishable and unadulterated light. And in the same proportion as among us those who are awake are superior to those who are asleep, so also in the universal world the things of heaven are superior to the things of earth; since the one enjoys an everlasting wakefulness which knows no sleep, on account of its energies which never stray, and never stumble, and which proceed rightly and successfully in every thing; while the others are oppressed by sleep, and if they wake up for a short time they are again pulled down and buried in slumber; because they are unable to look steadfastly and correctly at any thing with their souls, but are always straying and stumbling. For they are overshadowed by false opinions, by which they are compelled to submit to dreams, and are always behind the real truth, and are unable to comprehend any thing with a firm and tenacious grasp.

XXV. Moreover, Joseph is figuratively said to have been mounted upon the second best chariot which the king had, for the following reason. The statesman stands in the second rank next to the king; for he is not a private individual nor a king, but some one on the confines between the two. Being indeed superior to a private individual, and inferior in respect of authority to an absolute and independent king, having the people for his king, on behalf of whom he has determined to do every thing with a pure and perfectly guileless good faith; and he is borne as it were on high in a well-built chariot, being lifted on high both by the things committed to his charge and by the people, and especially so when he contains in his mind every thing, whether small or great, without any one ever opposing or resisting him, but all being cheerfully governed by him

under God to their own safety like sailors enjoying a fair voyage.

And the ring which the king gives him is the most manifest proof of confidence which the people, his king, places in the statesman, and also of that trust with which the statesman relies on the people which is as powerful as a king. And the golden circlet round his neck appears to indicate figuratively both high reputation and punishment at the same moment. For as long as all the affairs which concern the administration of the state proceed prosperously as far as he is concerned, he is proud, and is looked upon with veneration, and is honoured by the multitudes. But the moment that any unforeseen mishap occurs to him, not indeed intended, for such error deserves reproach, but arising from pure chance, which always deserves pardon, he is not the less dragged downwards by the ornament around his neck, and is humbled, his master all but saying to him in plain words, "I, indeed, gave you this circlet to be around thy neck, to be both an ornament while my affairs were going on well, and a halter when they were proceeding unfavourably."

XX. Moreover, I have also heard people discussing this passage with great apparent accuracy in a more figurative manner and according to quite a different interpretation. And their notion of it is this.

They say that the king of Egypt means our mind: the governor of the region of the body in every individual in us, and who like a king claims the supreme power. And by him when he has become devoted to the service of the body three objects are especially laboured at as being accounted worthy of exceeding care, namely, meat, and sweetmeats, and drinkables. With reference to which fact he also employs three persons to superintend the objects aforesaid, his chief baker, and his chief butler, and his chief cook. The one of whom presides over those things which relate to eating, the second over those things which belong to drinking, and the last to those sweetenings and sauces which belong to the confections. And they are all eunuchs; because the man who is devoted to pleasure is barren and unproductive of every thing which is most necessary, such as modesty, temperance, continence, justice, and every kind of virtue. For there is no one thing so hostile to another

as pleasure is to virtue, for the sake of which most people neglect all those matters which alone it is worth while to attend to, gratifying their unrestrained appetites, and submitting to all the commands which they impose upon them.

Therefore, the chief cook is not committed to prison at all, nor does he fall into any misfortune, because his sauces and sweetenings are not among the things which are very necessary, not being pleasures but only provocations to pleasure, such as are easily extinguished. But of the two who are occupied in the employment of the miserable belly, the chief baker and the chief butler, since eating and drinking are of all the things which are useful to life those which have the greatest power to keep the being together, and those who have the management of those things, if they bestow great care upon them, do very justly obtain praise; while, if they neglect them, they are thought worthy of anger or punishment.

But there is a difference in their punishments, because the need of the two things is different; that of food being the most indispensable, but that of wine not being very useful; for men can live without any wine, using only the pure drink of spring water. On which account there is a reconciliation made with, and pardon bestowed upon, the chief butler, as upon one who has erred in the least important particular. But the offences of the chief baker admit of no reconciliation and of no forgiveness, but incur an anger which leads to death, as he has been guilty of wrong in the most necessary matters; for want of food is followed by death. On which account he who has erred on these points very appropriately is put to death by hanging, suffering an evil similar to that which he has inflicted; for he also has hanged, and suffocated, and stretched out the famishing man by means of hunger.

XXVII. This is enough to say on this subject. Accordingly Joseph, being appointed the king's lieutenant, and having undertaken the government and superintendence of the whole of Egypt, went forth in order to become acquainted with all the natives, and investigated all the laws that were established in the different cities, and caused a great affection for himself to arise in the breasts of those who saw him, not only because of the services which he conferred upon every one of them, but also by the unspeakable and

unrivalled graces of his appearance and by the courtesy with which he associated with them. But when, in accordance with the interpretation of the dreams, the first seven years of fertility arrived, he collected one-fifth of the produce every year by means of his subordinate officers and others who were employed under him in the public offices, and by this means he collected such a vast quantity of sheaves of corn as no one recollected as having ever existed at any previous time. And the most evident proof of this is that they could not possibly be counted, even although thousands and thousands of persons were occupied in the task, whose sole business it was to devote all their energies to count them.

And when these seven years had passed, during which the plain of Egypt was fertile, the famine began. which, as it proceeded and increased, was not confined to Egypt; for as it became diffused, and from time to time extended, so as to be always comprehending fresh cities and countries in succession, it reached to the farthest borders of the land, both in the eastern and western direction, so as to reach at last over the whole world all around. Accordingly, it is said that no general pestilence ever extended so widely, not even that which the sons of the physicians call "the creeping pestilence;" for that also attacks all parts at once, and proceeding onwards rapidly like fire, utterly and completely devours the whole mass of the ulcerated body. Accordingly, they selected the men of the highest reputation in every district, and sent them into Egypt to procure corn; for already the prudence of the young man was celebrated in all quarters, who had thus provided abundant food against a time of necessity. And he at first commanded all the treasure-houses to be opened, calculating that he should make the people more cheerful when they had beheld the store that was provided, and that in some degree he should be feeding their souls rather than their bodies on good hopes. After that, by means of those to whom the office of regulating the distribution of corn was committed, he sold it to all who wished to buy, keeping a constant eye on the future, and seeing what was impending even more clearly than the present.

XXVIII. And at this crisis, his father also,* since his

* Genesis xlii. 1.

necessary food had by this time become scarce, not being aware of the good fortune of his son, sent ten of his sons to buy food, keeping the youngest at home, who was the uterine and own brother of the king's lieutenant. And they, when they had arrived in Egypt, met their brother as if he were a stranger, and being amazed at the dignity with which they beheld him surrounded, they addressed him with prostration according to the ancient fashion, their dreams now receiving confirmation and fulfilment. And he, when he beheld those who had sold him, immediately recognised them all, though he was not in the least recognised by any one of them himself, since God was not yet willing to reveal the truth on account of some necessary causes which at that time it was better should be buried in silence; and therefore he either altered the countenance of their brother who governed the country, so as to give him a more dignified appearance, or else he perverted the accurate judgment of the mind of those who beheld him.

But he acted not like a young man who, being the lieutenant and magistrate invested with such extensive powers, and having attained to the authority next to that of the king himself, to whom the east and west looked up, and elated with the pride of manhood and the vastness of his authority, might, now that the opportunity of revenge had presented itself, have shown his remembrance of the ill-treatment which he had received; but he bore what happened with self-restraint, and governed his own soul, and with great prudence feigned a perfect ignorance of and strangeness to them, and both by his looks, and by his voice, and by all the rest of his behaviour he pretended to be displeased at them. He said to them, "My men, you say nothing peaceful; but some one of the king's enemies has sent you forth as spies, and you, performing a base service for him, have expected to escape detection. But nothing that is done treacherously does escape detection, even if it be enveloped in profound darkness."

And when they endeavoured to make excuses for themselves, they argued that he was accusing them of what had never taken place, for that they had not come from a hostile people, and that they were not themselves imbued with any unfriendly feelings towards the people of the country, and that they could never have been induced to undertake such

an office as that of spies, for that they were by nature men of peace, and that they had learnt, almost from their childhood, from a most holy, and pious, and religious father, to honour stability and tranquillity; and that their father was a man who had had twelve sons, the youngest of whom, as he was not yet of an age to bear a long journey, was remaining at home, while we, whom you see here are ten more, and the remaining one is not.

XXIX. When he heard this, and heard those who had sold him all speak of him as dead, what think you did Joseph feel in his soul? for even if he did not utter the feelings which then encompassed him, still they unquestionably were burning within his breast, and exciting, and kindling strange emotions within him; nevertheless, with deep wisdom and humanity does he address them, saying, "If, in good truth, you have not come hither to spy the land, then, in order to prove your good faith to me, remain here some short period, and write a letter and send for your youngest brother, and let him come to you; or if, for your father's sake, you are anxious to depart, lest he perchance may be alarmed at your protracted absence, in that case depart all the rest of you, but let one of you remain behind as a hostage, until you return again with your youngest brother; and if you do not obey, then the most terrible death shall be your punishment."

He then threatened them in this manner, looking sternly at them, and giving every sign of violent anger, as far as appearances could go, and so he left them. But they, being full of consciousness and depression, afflicted themselves for their former treachery towards their brother, saying, "That wickedness which we committed is the cause of all our present evils, since justice, which takes the regulation of all human affairs, is now contriving some punishment for us; for having been quiet for a short time it is now awakened, displaying its nature, which is at all times relentless and implacable towards those who are deserving of punishment, and how can we deny that we are deserving of it? We in a merciless manner disregarded our brother when he besought us and supplicated us, though he had done no wrong, but had only, in the fulness of his natural affection, related to us, as to his nearest relations, the visions which had appeared to him in sleep; for which cause we, the most brutal

and savage of men, became enraged, and committed (for we must not now deny the truth) most impious actions; therefore let us now expect to suffer these things and even worse, we who, though we are almost the only men in the whole world who are called noble by birth, by reason of the exceeding virtues of our fathers, and grandfathers, and ancestors, have nevertheless disgraced our kindred, hastening to cover ourselves with notorious infamy."

But the eldest of the brethren, who also at the very beginning had opposed them when they were originally concocting their treachery, said to them, "Repentance is useless after the thing has been done; I exhorted you, I entreated you, pointing out to you how enormous the impiety you were meditating was, I begged you not to indulge your passion; but though you ought to have assented to me, you yielded to your own inconsiderate folly; therefore, we now are reaping the fruit of your self-will and impiety, and now the treachery which we exercised towards him is required at our hands; and he who requires it is not man, but either God, or reason, or the law of God."

XXX. The brother whom they had sold heard them conversing in this manner without saying anything himself, as he had hitherto spoken to them by an interpreter. And being overcome by his feelings, he was unable to restrain his tears, and turned away that he might not be seen by them, and pouring forth hot and incessant tears, and so, having relieved himself for a short time, he wiped his eyes and returned to them, and commanded the second in age of the brothers to be bound in the sight of them all, since he, as it were, corresponded to himself, who was the youngest but one; for in a large number the second corresponds to the last but one, as the first does to the last. Perhaps too, he bound him because the greatest share of the guilt belonged to him, as he was almost the original author of the plot against him, and as it was he who excited the others to the enmity which they displayed against him; for if he had arrayed himself on the side of the eldest when he gave his merciful and humane counsel, being younger than he, but older than all the rest, perhaps, and indeed most probably, the iniquity would have been checked, in consequence of those who had the highest rank and honour agreeing and co-operating together in the matter,

which fact would have carried great weight with it; but now, he, departing from the merciful and more excellent side of the question, went over to the unmerciful and cruel one, and putting himself forward as the leader of it, he in this way encouraged those who were inclined to join him in his audacious action, so that they unshrinkingly carried out their nefarious purpose.

This is the reason why he appears to me to have been selected from the whole body for the purpose of being bound. But the others now prepared for their return home, since the governor of the country had given charge to the officers to whom the sale of the wheat was entrusted to fill all the bags of his brothers, as though they had been strangers, and privily to replace in the mouths of their sacks the money which they had brought, without mentioning to any one that they had so restored it; and in the third place, to give them also abundant food which might be sufficient, and more than sufficient for them, on the way, in order that the corn which they had bought might be conveyed undiminished to their father.

But while they were on their way, and expressing, as was natural, their compassion for their brother who was in prison, and being equally grieved also for their father's sake at this second calamity which he was to hear of, his flourishing family of children being thus diminished and curtailed at every journey, and saying that he would never believe that he was kept in prison, because those who had been once stricken with misfortune are always dreading a repetition of the same calamity, evening overtook them, and having relieved their beasts of their burdens, they lightened them, but received themselves heavier anxiety than ever in their minds; for in times of rest to the body, the mind receives the impression made by unexpected events more readily, so as to be very severely weighed down and oppressed by them.

XXXI. For one of them, having opened one of the sacks, saw in the mouth of it his purse full of money; and when he had counted it, he found the whole price which he had paid down for the corn restored to him; and being amazed, he brought it to his brothers; and they, not imagining that it was meant as a favour to them, but rather, suspecting that it was a plot against them, were in great despondency

and wishing to examine all their sacks, set off again for fear of being pursued, and made all imaginable speed, almost, as one may say, running without stopping to take breath, and so they completed a journey which should have taken many days, in a short time. Then, one after another embracing their father, with copious tears, they all clung to him, and kissed him; and while he returned their embraces, although his soul speedily began to forebode some new calamity, for while they were thus approaching and saluting him he perceived the absence of the son who was left behind, and in his own mind blamed him for his slowness in being behind the others; for he was looking at them as they came in, being anxious to behold the number of his children complete.

But when no one from without came in besides, they, seeing that he was in a state of agitated suspense, said, "O my father! doubt is worse than even the certain knowledge of unexpected calamities; for when one is certainly apprised of such, one may discover a road to safety: but ignorance and doubt are the cause of error and perplexity; listen then, to the sad story which we have to tell, but which still must be told.

"The brother whom you sent along with us to buy corn, and who has not returned with us, is alive; for we must release you from the more terrible apprehension that he may be dead; but he is alive, and is remaining in Egypt with the governor of the country, who, whether it be from any false accusation which has been laid against us, or from any suspicion which he has himself conceived, charged us with being spies. And when we said all that the time would allow us to say in our defence, and mentioned you as being our father, and the brothers who were not of our company, one of them being dead, and the other remaining with you, who we said tarried behind at home on account of his age, inasmuch as he was still a child, making known and revealing to him all the circumstances of our family by reason of our absence of all suspicion, we availed nothing; but he said, that the only proof that could be given him of our truth and honesty would be the coming of our youngest brother to see him; for which reason he also detained the second of us, as a pledge and surety for his coming. Therefore his command is most grievous to

us. But the occasion is also more imperious than even his command, which we must necessarily submit to from our want of necessaries, since Egypt is the only country which can supply us, who are thus oppressed by famine, with necessary food."

XXXII. But he, groaning most bitterly, said, "Whom shall I lament first? the youngest but one, who was not the last, but the first to encounter the series of disasters which has befallen our family? or the second, on whom the second evil has fallen, namely, captivity, which is only inferior in misery to death? or the youngest, who is now to undertake that most detestable journey, since go he must, without being warned by the calamities which have befallen his brethren? and I, torn to pieces as to all my limbs and all my parts (for children are the limbs of their parents), am in danger of becoming utterly childless who was so short a time ago accounted happy in the number and excellence of my children."

But the eldest replied, "I give you my two sons as hostages, the only children that I have, slay them if I bring not back again to you, safe and sound, the brother whom you entrust to my hand, and who, by his visit to Egypt, will effect two things of the greatest importance for us; first, he will give a most evident proof that we are not spies and enemies; and, secondly, he will enable us to recover our brother, whom we have left in captivity."

But as his father was much grieved and said that he did not know what to do, because while he had but two sons of one mother, one of them was now dead, and the other was left desolate and almost alone, so that he dreaded the journey, and though alive would die from fear before he could accomplish it, from a recollection of those fearful events which his elder brother had encountered; while he was speaking thus, the brethren put forward as their spokesman him who was the boldest among them, and by his nature inclined to take the lead, and who was eloquent in speech, and he said what seemed good to them all; for they agreed, as their necessary food was falling short, for the corn which they had previously bought was now exhausted, and as the famine was again pressing upon and overwhelming them, to go for more in one united body, but not to go at all if the *youngest still* remained behind; because the governor of the

country had forbidden them to appear before him without him.

And their father, calculating like a wise man that it was better to expose one son to the uncertain and doubtful danger of the future, than to encounter the certain loss of so large a family, which the whole house must endure if they continued to be overwhelmed by the present scarcity, that most incurable of diseases, says to them, "But if the necessity which presses upon us is more powerful than my wishes, we must yield: for perhaps, perhaps I say, nature may be devising something better which she does not choose as yet to reveal to our minds. Depart, therefore, taking with you your youngest brother as you have determined; but do not go in the same manner as ye went in before. For formerly you had only need of money to buy corn, since no one knew you, and since you had not at that time suffered any intolerable calamity. But now you require presents also; for three reasons. First of all, to propitiate the governor and dispenser of corn, to whom you say that you are known. Secondly, in order that so you may the more speedily recover him who is held in captivity, by thus paying down a large ransom for him. And thirdly, for the sake of as far as possible removing any idea of your being spies. Therefore, taking presents of all that our land supplies, offer them to the man as a kind of first fruits, and take double money, both that which you paid before, for perhaps it was restored to you through the oversight of some one, and also another sum sufficient to buy corn; and take with you also my prayer, which we offer to God our Saviour, that you who are strangers may go acceptably to the natives of the country, and that you may return in safety, giving back to your father those necessary pledges, his children, and bringing back the brother whom you have left in bondage, and also the youngest, as yet unacquainted with trouble, whom you are now taking with you." And so they took their departure and hastened towards Egypt.

XXXIII. Then a few days afterwards they arrived in Egypt, and when the governor of the country saw them he was greatly pleased, and ordered the steward of his house to prepare a sumptuous dinner, and to bring the men in that they might partake of his salt and of his table. And when they were brought in to dinner they were in a state

of great suspense, as not knowing what would be done with them, and were in confusion, suspecting that they might perhaps have a false accusation of theft brought against them on the ground of their having taken away the price of the corn that they had bought and which they had found in their sacks, as if they had done so wilfully. So then they came up to the steward of the house, and made a defence on a subject on which no one ventured to accuse them, purging their consciences, and, at the same time, displaying the money which they had brought back and offering to return it. But he cheered them with favourable and humane language, saying, "There is no one so impious as to found a false accusation on the graces of God, who is all-merciful. He it is who has rained treasures into your sacks, giving you not only food but also riches out of his abundant store." So they being comforted, then arranged in order the presents which they had brought from home to display them to the governor. And when the master of the house came in they offered them to him. And when he had inquired of them how they were, and whether their father, of whom they had previously spoken, was still alive, they answered nothing concerning themselves, but concerning their father they replied that he was alive and well. And when he had prayed for him, and addressed them in the most favourable and God-fearing manner, looking upon his brother by the same mother, when he saw him he could not restrain his tears, but being now overcome by his feelings, he turned himself about before he made himself known to them, and going out on a pretext as if some urgent cause compelled him (for it was not a favourable opportunity for him to tell them the truth), he wept in a secret chamber of his house and poured forth abundance of tears.

XXXIV. Then when he had washed his hands he restrained his sorrow by the power of reason, and coming back again he feasted the strangers, returning to them the brother who had come with them before, and who had been kept as a hostage for the appearance of the youngest. And with them there also feasted others of the nobles of the Egyptians. And the manner of their entertainment was to each party in accordance with their national customs, since Joseph thought it wrong to overturn ancient laws, and especially at a banquet where the pleasures should be more numerous than

the annoyances. And as he commanded them all to sit down in order according to their age, as the men had not yet learnt the fashion of lying down on occasions of banqueting, they marvelled to see whether the Egyptians would adopt the same habits as the Hebrews, having a regard to regular order, and knowing how to distinguish between the honours due to the eldest and the youngest. Perhaps, too, they thought this man who manages all the common business of the house, because the country has hitherto been less refined in matters relating to eating, has now not only introduced regularity and good order into great matters, by which the affairs of peace and war are accustomed to be brought to a successful issue, but also into those things which are usually accounted of less importance, most of which, indeed, refer mainly to amusement. For the object of banquets is cheerfulness, and they do not at all allow the guests to be too solemn and austere-looking.

While they were praising the arrangements of the feast in this quiet way, tables are brought indeed, of no great costliness or luxury, as, by reason of the famine, their host did not think it proper to revel too much amid the distresses of others; and they, like men of sense and understanding, praised this part of his conduct also, because he had thus avoided an unseemly magnificence, which is a thing calculated to provoke envy, saying that he was maintaining the character at the same time of one who sympathised with the needy, and also of a liberal entertainer, placing himself between the two, and avoiding all cause for blaming him in either particular. Therefore his preparations for the entertainment escaped all ill-will being suited to the time, and what was wanting was made up by continual cheerfulness, and by pledging one another in wine, and by good wishes, and by exhortations to eat what there was, which to persons of gentleman-like and accomplished minds was more pleasant than all the sumptuous dishes and liquors which men fond of eating and of epicurism provide for eating and drinking, which are in reality deserving of no serious care, but by which they do in truth display their little-mindedness with great pomp.

XXXV. And on the next day he sent, the first thing in the morning, for the steward of his household, and commanded him to fill all the sacks of the men which they had brought with them with corn, and a second time to put

back in the mouths of their sacks the price which they had brought with them, and to put in the sack of the youngest the most beautiful of his silver cups out of which he himself was accustomed to drink; and he cheerfully did as he was commanded, taking care that no one was a witness of his actions. And they, not knowing any of the things which had been done thus secretly, departed, rejoicing in all the good fortune which had befallen them beyond all their expectations; for what they had expected was this, to have a false accusation laid against them, as if they had stolen the money which had been restored to them, and never to recover their brother whom they had left as a hostage, and perhaps also, besides that, to lose their youngest brother who would be seized upon by force by the man who had been so determined that he should be brought.

But what had happened to them was better than their most sanguine prayers, since, in addition to having no false accusations laid against them, they had also been admitted to the bread and salt of the governor, which among all men is a token of genuine friendship, and had also recovered their brother without his having received any injury, without having had recourse to the intercession and entreaty of any mediator, and were also taking back their youngest brother in safety to their father, having escaped all suspicion of being spies, and bearing with them an abundant quantity of food, and having good and well-founded hopes for the future, for they thought that even if necessary food was repeatedly to fail them, they should never again themselves be in exceeding want as before, but might return joyfully to the governor of the country as to a friend and not a stranger.

XXXVI. But while they were feeling disposed in this way, and revolving such thoughts in their souls, a sudden and unexpected confusion came upon them, for the steward of the household, being commanded to do so, ran after them as if to attack them, bringing with him a vast multitude of servants, waving his hands, and making signs to them to stop, and then coming up to them out of breath he said, "You have now set the seal to all the accusations that have been brought against you; you have returned evil for good, and turned back upon the same road of iniquity as before; you have not only stolen and carried off the price of the corn,

but you have committed even a greater offence than that, for wickedness which has obtained forgiveness gets more shameless; you, you very grateful and very peaceful men, have stolen the most beautiful and most valuable drinking cup belonging to my master, the very cup in which he pledged you; you who did not even know what was meant by the name of spy, and who brought back double money to restore that which you had previously paid and professed to have found in your sacks,—a trick, as it should seem, and a bait to enable you to catch and snare a more valuable prize; but wickedness does not always prosper, but though always endeavouring to escape notice it is detected."

While he was running on in this way against them they stood motionless and speechless, those most grievous of all evils, sorrow and fear, falling upon them thus suddenly, so that they were unable even to open their mouths, for the advent of unexpected evils makes even those who are eloquent actually speechless; but at length they recovered themselves, and lest they should seem to be silent, because they were self-convicted by their own consciences, they spoke and said, "How shall we reply and defend ourselves, and to whom? for you who are our accuser are going to be our judge also; you, who even if others had accused us ought to have been our advocate from the experience that you have already had of us. The money which on the former occasion we found replaced in our sacks, we brought back again in order to restore it, though no one had convicted us of having received it again, and do you suppose that after that we became so completely changed as to requite our entertainer with injury and theft? This was not so; and never let it enter your mind that we have done any such thing; but whichever of us brethren is found to have the cup let him die the death; for if any such wicked deed has been done there are many reasons why we should suffer death in atonement of it; in the first place, because covetousness and a desire for the property of others is a most wicked thing; secondly, because to attempt to injure those who have done one good is a most impious action; thirdly, because for men who are proud of the nobility of their birth to dare to destroy the reputation of their ancestors by scandalous actions of their own is a most shameful

disgrace; and since if any one of us has stolen the cup of the governor he is liable to all these reproaches, let him die as one who has performed actions worthy of ten thousand deaths."

XXXVII. And while speaking thus they unloose the burdens from off their beasts and take them down, and encourage the steward with all diligence to search them, and to look for the cup, and he, not being unaware that it was lying in the sack of the youngest, inasmuch as he himself had secretly placed it there, behaved cunningly, and began with the eldest, and so went on in regular order, taking them according to their ages, and searching, while each willingly brought forward his sack and displayed its contents, till he came to the last, in whose possession the sought-for cup was found, so that they all when they saw it lifted up their voices, and lamented, and rent their clothes, groaning heavily, and shedding tears, and before his execution bewailing their brother while he was still alive, and bewailing also their father no less than him, because he had foretold the calamities which would happen to his son, on which account he was unwilling to permit their brother to travel with them when they wished him to do so.

And being downcast and confused they returned back by the same road to the city, being quite overwhelmed at what had happened, and looking at what had taken place as a plot, and not suspecting their brother of covetousness.

Then when they were brought before the governor of the country they displayed their real affection and brotherly love with genuine feeling, for falling all together at his knees as if they were all liable to be punished for the theft, a wickedness too great to be mentioned, they all wept over him, and besought him, and gave themselves up to him, and offered to submit to voluntary slavery, and called him their master, speaking of themselves as foreign captives, as slaves, as bought with a price, and omitting no name whatever indicative of the most complete slavery; but he, wishing to try them still more, addressed them in a most angry manner, and with the greatest possible severity, and said to them, "May I never be guilty of such an action as to condemn such a number to captivity for the sin of one, for how can it be right to summon those persons to share in a punishment, who have had no share in the commission of the

offence? Let him alone be punished, since he alone has committed the crime. I know therefore that by your laws you condemn the man who has been found guilty of theft to be put to death in front of the city; but I, wishing to act in all respects in a gentle and most merciful manner, will mitigate the punishment, and adjudge him to slavery instead of to death."

XXXVIII. And when they were grieved at his threat, and wholly overwhelmed at the false accusations brought against them, the fourth in age, and he was one of a daring character, combined with modesty, and full of true courage, inasmuch as he had studied freedom of speech without impudence, came forward and said, "I entreat you, O master! not to give way to your passion; nor, because you are placed in the rank next to the king, to be in a hurry to condemn us before you have heard our defence. When on our former journey hither, you inquired of us concerning our brother and our father, we answered you: Our father was an old man, aged, not more because of the power of time, than because of his uninterrupted misfortunes, by which he has been constantly exercised like a wrestler, and has passed his whole life amid labours and calamities hard to be borne.

"And our brother is very young, a mere child, loved beyond all measure by his father, since he is the son of his old age, and because also he had but him and one other child by the same mother, and this one alone is left, since the elder died a violent death. And when you commanded us to bring our brother hither, and threatened us that, if he did not come, you would not permit us to come into your sight, we departed in great depression of spirits; and with difficulty, when we had arrived at home, did we declare the commands which we had received from you to our father. And he at first wholly refused, being greatly alarmed for the child; but as necessary food was becoming scarce, and as not one of us dared to come hither to buy food without our youngest brother, by reason of your vehement commands; he was at last, with difficulty, persuaded to send him with us, blaming us bitterly for having confessed that we had another brother, and pitying himself very much for being about to be separated from him; for he is but a child and

wholly ignorant of business, and not only of business in a foreign land, but even of such as is transacted in his own city.

"How, then, shall we approach our father who is under the influence of such feelings? And with what eyes shall we be able to behold him without this his youngest son? He will die most miserably if he only hears that his son has not returned; and then all those who delight in hatred and in evil-speaking, and who rejoice in such misfortunes of their neighbours, will call us murderers and parricides, and the greater part of the accusation will fall upon me; for I promised my father to give him up many things, confessing that I received my brother as a pledge, which I was to restore whenever he was re-claimed from me. And how shall I be able to restore him unless you are prevailed upon to show us mercy? I entreat you, then, to have pity on the old man, and to give a thought to the evils by which he will be grieved, if he does not receive back again him whom he has unwisely entrusted to my hands.

"Nevertheless, do you exact punishment for the injuries which you imagine to have been done to you; and that punishment I will volunteer to submit to. Set me down as your slave from this day forth. I will cheerfully undergo the fate of those who have been just bought, if you will only be willing to let the child go free; and not only shall you, if you will give him his liberty, receive thanks from him and me, but also from him who is not present, but who will then be relieved from his anxiety, the father of these men here, and of all the family; for we are all your suppliants, having fled for succour to your right hand, and may we never fail to obtain it.

"Let, then, compassion for the age of the old man seize your heart, who during his whole life has constantly devoted himself to the labours of virtue. He has brought all the cities of Syria to receive him, and to submit to his authority, and to do him honour; even though he guides himself by foreign customs and laws very different from them, and although he is in all respects very unlike the natives of the land. But the excellence of his life, and the consistency and uniformity of his actions with his words, and of his words with his actions, have prevailed, so that he has been able to win over those who, out of regard for their national customs, were not at first well-disposed towards

him. You will do him such a favour that it will not be possible for him to receive a greater. For what can be a more valuable gift to give to a father, than to allow him to receive back a son of whose safety he has despaired?"

XXXIX. But all this conduct was but an experiment, just as the former circumstances had been too, because the governor of the country was desirous to see what kind of good-will they had towards him who was his brother by the same mother. For he had been afraid that they felt some kind of natural dislike towards him, as children of a step-mother often do to the family of a previous wife of their father, who may have been held in equal honours by him. It was with this view that he both reproached them as spies and inquired about their family, for the sake of knowing whether his brother was still alive, or whether he had been put out of the way by treachery. And he retained one while he allowed the rest to depart, after they had agreed to bring back their youngest brother with them, whom he desired to see above all things, and so to be relieved of his bitter and grievous sorrow on his account. And when he arrived, and when he beheld his brother, he was then in a slight degree relieved from his anxiety, and he invited them to an entertainment, and while he was feasting them he regaled his own brother by the same mother with more costly viands and luxuries than the rest, looking carefully at every one of them, and judging from their countenances whether there was any envy secretly cherished in their hearts. And when he saw them all cheerful, and all eager, and earnest for the honour of the youngest, conjecturing now by two strong proofs that there was no hatred smouldering beneath, he devised a third mode of trial likewise, bringing a charge against their youngest brother, that he appeared to have committed a theft; for this was likely to be the clearest possible proof of the disposition of each of them and of the affection which they bore to their brother, who was thus falsely accused.

From all which circumstances he now clearly saw that his mother's offspring was not looked upon with hostile feelings and was not plotted against, and he also received a very probable impression respecting the events which had befallen himself, and learnt to think that he had suffered what he had, not so much because of the treachery of his brethren,

as through the direction of the providence of God who sees things afar off, and who beholds the future no less than the present.

XL. After this he had recourse to a reconciliation and agreement with his brethren, being influenced by his own affectionate disposition, and from his desire to cause no shame to his brethren, and to give no cause of reproach against them because of their conduct towards him, he did not choose that any of the Egyptians should be present on the occasion of his first making himself known to them. But he ordered all the servants to leave the apartment, and suddenly pouring forth a stream of tears, and signing to them with his right hand to approach nearer to him, that no one else might be able by chance even to hear any thing that passed, he said unto them, "I, being about to reveal a matter which has long been kept in the shade, and which has appeared to be hidden by the long lapse of time, do now by myself disclose it to you by yourselves. I myself am that brother whom you sold to go into Egypt, I whom you now behold standing here."

And when they were all amazed at seeing him beyond all their expectation, and were greatly agitated, and, as if under the influence of some violent attraction, cast their eyes down to the ground, and stood motionless, mute, and speechless, he said, "Be not cast down; I give you complete forgiveness for all the things which you have done to me. Do not think that you want any one else as a mediator. I, of my own absolute power and of my own voluntary inclination, come of my own accord to an agreement with you; being guided by two especial signs, first, by my piety towards my father, to whom I owe a great deal of gratitude, and also, secondly, by my own natural humanity, which I feel towards all men, and especially towards those of my own blood.

"And I think that it was not you, but God, who was the author of the events which happened to me, because he desired that I should be the servant and minister of his graces and gifts which he thought fit to bestow on the human race in the time of their greatest necessity. And in the very outset you may receive a proof of what I say in the things which you see. I am the governor of all the land of Egypt, and the honours which I enjoy are next to those of

the king himself, and the aged monarch honours me, though I am only a young man, as if I were his father; and I am honoured and obeyed not only by the people of the country but also by numerous other nations, whether they are subject to Egypt or independent; for they all have need of me, the governor of the land, by reason of their present scarcity. For silver and gold, and what is still more necessary than either of these things, namely, food, is all stored up in my treasure-houses alone, and it is I who distribute and dispense what they want for their unavoidable necessities to each individual, so that nothing is wanting either for food or for the satisfying of their natural wants.

"And I have not detailed all this to you from a wish to exalt myself or to give myself airs, but that you may know that it is no one of you or any man whatsoever that has been the cause of my being first a slave and afterwards a prisoner. For on one occasion a false accusation was brought against me, and I was thrown into prison. But he who changed that extremity of calamity and misfortune into the highest and most complete good fortune was God, with whom all things are possible.

"Since these then, are my opinions, do not fear any longer, but discard all your sorrow and anxiety, and change to a joyful cheerfulness; and it will be well for you to hasten to your father, and to be the first to take him the good news of my being found, for reports are quick in penetrating everywhere."

XLI. So they one after another began to pour forth praises of him without ceasing, and panegyrized him with unmodified encomium, each relating some different circumstance to his credit, one extolling his forgiving spirit, another his affection towards his family, and another his accuteness; and the whole company of them extolled his piety, and attributed to God the happy end to which everything had been brought, and being no longer melancholy or out of humour at the unexpected events which befell them, on their first arrival or at their original difficulties; they also praised his excessive patience and fortitude, combined with modesty, when he, who had experienced such vicissitudes of fortune, neither when he was a slave, allowed himself to say a single word to the injury of his brothers, as having sold him, nor, when he was led away to prison, did he in his

despondency say a single word that he should not have said, nor, though he remained there a long time, as prisoners usually do, did he, as is so much the custom, compare his misfortunes with those of his fellow prisoners so as to reveal anything, but kept silence as if he had no knowledge of the cause of the events that had happened to him.

Nor again, when he was interpreting the dreams either to the eunuch or to the king, which was a favourable occasion for relating his own story, did he ever say a word about his own nobility of birth, nor yet when he was appointed lieutenant of the king, and received the superintendence and government of the whole of Egypt, even with the view of not being thought an ignoble and obscure person, but one who was really descended of noble ancestors, not a slave by nature, but one who had been exposed to intolerable treachery, and calamities at the hands of persons from whom he was least entitled to expect it.

Moreover in addition to all this, great praise was bestowed on his affability and courtesy; for being acquainted with the insolence and rudeness of other governors, they marvelled at the absence of pretence and display which they saw in him, and they admired his kindness too, who, though the moment that he beheld them after their first journey he might have put them to death, or on the last occasion either, merely by refusing to supply them with food when oppressed with hunger, was not content with not punishing them, but even gave them necessary food gratuitously as though they had been persons worthy of favour, ordering the price they had paid to be restored to them: and all the circumstances of their treachery towards him, and of their selling him, were so wholly concealed from, and unknown to any one, that the magistrates of the Egyptians sympathised with him in his joy, as if this was the first occasion of the brothers of the governor having arrived; moreover they invited them to hospitality, and made haste to relate their arrival to the king, and everything everywhere was full of joy, no less than would have been the case if the plain had suddenly become fertile, and the famine had changed into abundance.

XLII. But the king, when he heard that Joseph had a father and a numerous family, advised him to press his father to remove into Egypt with all his house, promising

to give them the most fertile district in Egypt on their arrival. Therefore Joseph gave his brothers chariots, and waggons, and a great multitude of beasts of burden, loaded with all necessary things, and a number of servants, that they might conduct his father into Egypt in safety.

But when they arrived at home, and told their father their story about their brother, which was so apparently incredible and beyond all his hopes, he did not much believe them; for even though those who brought the account were trustworthy, still the greatness and extraordinary character of the circumstances which they reported, did not allow him to believe them easily: but when the old man saw the vast preparation, and the supplies of all necessary things, at such a time, in such abundance, corresponding to the good fortune of his son which they were reporting to him, he praised God that he had made complete that part of his house which seemed to be deficient; but his joy immediately begat fear again in his soul, respecting his departure from his national laws and customs; for he knew that youth is by nature prone to fall, and that in foreign nations there is great indulgence given to error; and especially in the country of gypt, a land in a state of utter blindness respecting the true God, in consequence of their making created and mortal things into gods.

Moreover, the addition of riches and glory is a snare to weak minds, and he also recollected that he had been left to himself, as no one had gone forth out of his father's house with him to keep him in the right way, but he had been left solitary and destitute of all good instructions, and might therefore be supposed to be ready to change and adopt their foreign customs. Therefore, when that Being who alone is able to behold the invisible soul, saw him in this frame of mind, he took pity on him and appearing unto him by night while he was lying asleep, said unto him: "Fear nothing about your departure into Egypt; I myself will guide you on your way, and will give you a safe and pleasant journey; and I will restore to you your long lamented son, who was once many years ago believed by you to have died, but who is not only alive, but is even governor of all that mighty country."

So Jacob, being filled with good hopes, rose up in the morning with joy, and hastened on his way; and when his

son heard that he was near, for scouts and watchers who were placed along the road gave him notice of everything, he went with speed to meet his father when he was at no great distance from the borders of the land; and they met one another near the city, which is called the city of heroes, and they fell into one another's arms placing their heads on each other's necks, and soaking their garments with tears, and satisfying themselves abundantly with long enduring embraces, and unwillingly at last loosing one another, they proceeded to the palace. And when the king beheld them he was amazed at the dignity of Jacob's appearance, and he received and saluted him not as the father of his lieutenant but as his own, with all possible respect and honour; and after showing him not only all the ordinary but also many extraordinary marks of respect, he gave him a most excellent district of land of the greatest fertility; and hearing that his sons were skilful breeders of cattle, having great substance in flocks and herds, he appointed them overseers of all his own flocks and herds, and committed to their charge his goats, and his oxen, and his sheep, and all his innumerable animals of every kind.

XLIII. And the young man, Joseph, displayed such excessive good faith and honesty in all his dealings, that though the time and the circumstances of the time gave him innumerable opportunities of making money, so that he might, in a short period, have become the richest man of that age or kingdom, he still so truly honoured genuine riches before illegitimate wealth, and the treasure which sees rather than that which is blind, that he stored up all the silver and gold which he collected as the price of the corn in the king's treasury, not appropriating a single drachm of it to his own use, but being satisfied with nothing beyond the gifts which the king bestowed on him voluntarily, in acknowledgment of his services.

And in this manner he governed Egypt, and other countries also with it, and other nations, while oppressed with the famine, in a manner too admirable for any description to do it justice, distributing food to all in a proper manner, and looking, not only at the present advantage, but also at what would be of future benefit: therefore, when the seventh year of the scarcity arrived, he sent for the farmers (for there was now a prospect of fertility and abundance), and

gave them barley and wheat for seed, taking care that no one should appropriate what he gave for other purposes, but should sow what he received in the fields, to which end he selected men of honesty and virtues as overseers and superintendents, who were to take care that the sowing was properly performed.

And when a long time after the famine his father died, his brothers were filled with secret misgivings, and feared lest now he should remember the evil that they had done to him, and should retaliate upon them and afflict them, and so they came to him and besought him earnestly, bringing with them their wives and their children. And he wept and said, "The occasion indeed is a natural one, to fill with secret apprehension those who have done intolerable things, and who are convicted more by their own consciences than by anything else; for the death of our father has revived in you the ancient fear which you entertained before our reconciliation, that I had merely bestowed pardon on you for the sake of not grieving our father; but I do not change my disposition with the changes of time, nor, after I have agreed to a reconciliation and forgiveness, will I ever do anything inconsistent with such agreement; for I have not been postponing revenge and watching for opportunities to wreak it, but I once for all gave you immunity from all punishment, being influenced partly by feelings of respect for my father, for I must speak the plain truth, and partly by natural necessary affection for you.

"But if I did every thing that was merciful and humane for my father's sake while he was alive, I will also adhere to it now that he is dead. But in my real opinion no good man ever dies, but such will live for ever and ever, without growing old, in an immortal nature which is no longer bound up in the necessities of the body. And why should I remember only that father who was created and born? We have also the uncreated, immortal, everlasting God for our father, who sees all things and hears all people, even when silent, and who always sees even those things which lie hidden in the recesses of the mind, and whom I look upon and invoke as a witness of my sincere reconciliation; for 'I am (and do not you be astonished at my words), I am in the place of God,'* who has changed your evil designs

* Genesis L. 19.

against me so as to bring forth from them an abundance of good things. Be ye therefore fearless, and know that for the future you shall enjoy still better fortune than hitherto you have while our father was still alive."

XLIV. Having encouraged his brethren with these words he confirmed his promises still more by actions, leaving out nothing which could show his care for his brethren.

And after the famine, when the inhabitants were now full of joy at the fertility and prosperity of the country he was honoured by all men, who thus recompensed him for the benefits which they had received from him in the season of their despair. And the report of him became noised abroad, and filled all the cities with his glory and reputation.

And he lived a hundred and ten years, and then died at a good old age, having enjoyed the greatest perfection of beauty, and wisdom, and eloquence of speech. The beauty of his person is testified to by the violent love with which he inflamed the wife of the eunuch; his wisdom by the evenness of his conduct in the indescribable variety of circumstances that attended the whole of his life, by which he wrought regularity among things that were irregular, and harmony among things that were discordant. His eloquence of speech is displayed in his interpretation of the dreams, in his affability in ordinary conversation, and by the persuasion which followed his words; in consequence of which his subjects all obeyed him cheerfully and voluntarily, rather than from any compulsion.

Of these hundred and ten years he spent seventeen, till the expiration of his boyhood, in his father's house; and thirteen he passed amid unforeseen events, being plotted against, and sold, and becoming a slave, and having false accusations brought against him, and being thrown into prison; and the remaining eighty years he spent in authority and in all manner of prosperity, being the most excellent manager and administrator both of scarcity and plenty, and the most competent of all men to manage affairs under either complexion of circumstances.

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